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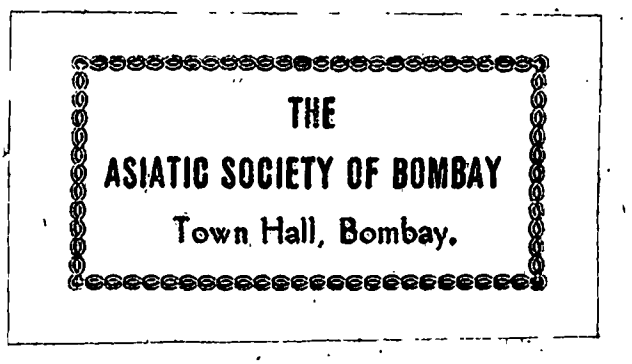

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THE

HISTORY

OF THE

REIGN OF GEORGE III.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED,

A VIEW OF THE PROGRESSIVE IMPROVEMENT OF ENGLAND,
IN PROSPERITY AND STRENGTH,
TO
THE ACCESSION OF HIS MAJESTY.

8 1601

By ROBERT BISSET, LL.D.
AUTHOR OF THE LIFE OF BURKE, &c. &c.

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CONTENTS

OF

THE FIFTH VOLUME.

CHAP. LII.

Overtures of the French government for peace with Britain. — Le Brun, the minister, proposes to send an ambassador to England. — Letters containing his propositions are delivered to lord Grenville — but receive no answer. — Alarming state of France — at war with all her neighbours. — Intestine war in La Vendée. — The victorious allies invade the French dominions. — Battle at St. Amand between the allies and the French. — The Duke of York and the British troops take a share in the action. — British soldiers supremely excellent in close fight — in spite of French numbers and artillery, by the bayonet decide the fate of the day. — Battle of Famars and the defeat of the French. — Blockade and surrender of Conde. — Siege of Valenciennes — strength of the fortress — operations — taken after a siege of six weeks. — Successes on the Rhine. — Mentz taken by the Prussian army. — France torn by dissensions. — Mountain excite a clamour against the Brissotines. — Establishment of the revolutionary tribunal. — Brissotines, with distinguished speculative ability, deficient in practical talents. — Mountain superior in decision and daring atrocity. — Brissot, Roland, and their supporters, seized and committed to prison. — Robespierre and his associates become rulers of France. — System of terror reigns. — Constitution of 1793. — Singular absurdity and anarchy. — Committees of public and general safety. — Combination in the south for overthrowing the frightful tyranny. — Toulon puts itself under the protection of Lord Hood and the Britsh fleet. — Comprehensive and efficacious malignity of the governing junto. — Robespierre and his band abolish Christianity — publicly and nationally abjure the Supreme Being — proscribe genius, destroy commerce, confiscate remaining property — debase every

every kind of excellence — attempt to level all civil, political, and moral distinctions. — The pressure of the war facilitates their atrocities. — Forced loans — requisitions. — Bold scheme of the war-minister to raise the nation in mass. — Efficacy of this system — confounds all calculations of the allied powers — overcomes the insurgents of La Vendée — forces the British to seek safety by evacuating Toulon. — Netherlands. — Activity and progress of the Duke of York and the British troops. — Victory at Lincennes — invests Dunkirk with reasonable hopes of success. - - *Page* 1

CHAP. LIII.

Projects of political reform. — Club of united Irishmen. — Institution and objects. — Convention bill. — Britain — great numbers are infected with the desire of change. — Causes ignorance, vanity, and visionary enthusiasm, more than malignant intention. — Propensity in the lower orders to be spokesmen — arises from the free interchange of opinion which Britons enjoy — at this time is abused. — Dangerous tendency of certain political associations and sentiments. — Scotland. — Messrs. Muir and Palmer — trials of for sedition. — They are sentenced to transportation. — The punishment is represented as excessive, and even illegal. — Scotch convention for new modelling the constitution — consists chiefly of persons of low condition — dispersed by the civil power. — Their leaders are tried and sentenced to transportation. — Meeting of parliament. — Mr. Fox and his supporters recommend peace — arguments against and for. — Mr. Pitt's reasoning on the war, and the internal system of France. — Lord Mornington's view of the subject. — A great majority approve of the continuance of the war. — Messrs. Fox and Sheridan impute to the combination the astonishing efforts of France. — Discussion of the question with whom should we treat. — The opponents of the war predict the dissolution of the confederacy, and the triumph of the French. — Mr. Fox complains that the object of the war is indefinite — contrasted with former wars. — He prophecies that the war with France, like the war with America, would terminate in disappointment. — Various motions for peace — rejected. — Questions respecting the trials for sedition in Scotland. — Mr. Adam's proposed amendment of the Scottish criminal law — debate negatived. — Proposed enquiry into the conduct of the Scottish judges. — His speech on that subject. — Reply of the lord advocate. — The motion of Mr. Adam is rejected. — Third proposition of Mr. Adam for assimilating the Scottish to the English criminal law. — Masterly speech of Mr. Adam on that subject. — Answer of Mr. Dundas. — Reply of Mr. Fox.

CONTENTS.

Fox. — The proposition is negatived. — Progress of the innovating spirit among the lower ranks. — Seditious lectures against the British constitution, and kingly government. — Proceedings of the democratic societies. — Plan of a national convention — discovered by ministers — leaders arrested, and papers seized. — Committees of both houses appointed to examine their papers — from the reports Mr. Pitt proposes a bill for detaining suspected persons without allowing them the benefit of the habeas corpus act — bill passed into a law. — Ministers, including lord Loughborough the chancellor, consider the crimes charged as high treason. — Lord Thurlow asserts, that by the law of England they are not treason. — Supplies, subsidies, and taxes. — Debate on the introduction of Hessian troops. — Apprehensions of an invasion. — Voluntary contributions for levying troops. — Session closes. — Internal proceedings in France. — Jacobin faction and Robespierre paramount. — Iniquitous trial, condemnation, and punishment of the queen. — Brissot and the other Girond prisoners put to death. — Orleans shares the same fate. — Danton overborne by Robespierre. — The Parisian mob adore Robespierre. — Real talents and character. - - - - - *Page* 30.

CHAP. LIV.

Jealousy among the allies. — The Emperor tries to raise his subjects in mass — is opposed by the king of Prussia. — Plan of the campaign. — Respective force of the belligerent powers. — The Emperor joins the allied armies. — Energy of the revolutionary leaders in France. — Rebellion is quelled in La Vendée. — The confederates take the field. — Siege of Landreci. — Conflicts between the allies and the republicans. — Battle of the 24th of April, between the duke of York and the republicans. — Our prince and countrymen are victorious. — Landreci is taken. — Testimony of the convention to the heroism of the English. — Pichegru — his new plan of warfare — well suited to the state of his army. — System of incessant attack. — Co-operating line of French armies from the German Rhine to the sea. — The French wisely avoid a close engagement with the British. — Separation of the Confederates. — Jourdain advances with an army in mass. — The Prince of Cobourg attempts to oppose him without the assistance of the Duke of York — receives a signal defeat at Fleurus, which decides the fate of the campaign. — Pichegru in West-Flanders attacks and defeats Clairfait. — Dangerous situation of the Duke of York — who retires to Antwerp. — Earl Moira is ordered to Flanders with his army. — The Prince of Wales offers to act under him as a volunteer — it is not deemed expedient

pedient to risk the person of the heir-apparent. — His lordship lands at Ostend — finds the place surrounded by enemies — determines to force his way to the Duke of York — masterly execution and success of his design. — Advances of the French. — The Austrians entirely evacuate the Netherlands. — Intrepid stand of the British at Breda. — The Duke of York and the Prince of Orange are obliged to fall back — they retreat behind the Meuse. — Victories of the Republicans on the Rhine. — The German troops cross the Rhine. — Address of the emperor to the German princes — is totally unavailing. Faithlessness of the King of Prussia. — Opinions on the operations and events of this campaign. — Suspicions unfavourable to the Prince of Cobourg — are not supported by proof. — Cobourg a man of very moderate abilities. — Victories of the republicans over the gallant Clairfait. — The republicans reduce the whole left bank of the Rhine. — The British gain some advantages. — Winter campaign in Holland. — Sickness and mortality of the British troops — intrepid efforts of the exhausted remains. — Immense superiority of numbers obliges our reduced army to evacuate Holland — which yields to the French arms. — Campaign of 1794 peculiarly disastrous to the British army. — Strictures of military critics on the plan of operations. — Strictures of political critics on the executive councils of Britain: — Efforts of France beyond all evidence of experience or probable conjecture — the event therefore does not necessarily afford grounds of either military or political censure. — Signal successes of Britain when she fought alone — her fleets paramount in the Mediterranean — reduce Corsica, and protect Spain and Italy — in the West Indies she subdues Martinico, Guadaloupe, St. Lucie, and part of St. Domingo. — Operations of Earl Howe and the Channel fleet — skilful manœuvre to bring the enemy to battle — battle of the first of June — numbers, force, and courageous efforts of the enemy — unavailing against the British fleet — decisive, glorious, and momentous victory. *Page* 80

CHAP. LV.

Internal affairs of France. — The Cordeliers. — The tenure of Robespierre's tyranny, the fear of foreign enemies, — a powerful party quickly formed against him — doomed to death — perishes on the scaffold. — His most iniquitous decrees rescinded. — Jacobin clubs entirely abolished. — Dawnings of social order begin to re-appear in France. — Britain. — Trials for treason. — Edinburgh — Watt and Downie — Watt's conspiracy not treason by the letter of Edward III.'s statute — treason by the judicial interpretation of that statute. — Condemned, and suffers death. — Alleged plot to assassinate the king

king — the allegation supported by no proof. — Trial of Thomas Hardy, John Horne Tooke, and John Thelwal, for high treason. — Ability of the lawyers on both sides. — Extraordinary eloquence of Mr. Erskine. — The accused are respectively acquitted. — Riots in the metropolis. — Meeting of parliament. — Mr. Pitt argues the downfal of the present system of France from the exhaustion of her finances. — Opposition contends, that the enthusiastic energy of the French would discover new resources; and alleges France to be returning to social order. — Discussion respecting the practicability of negociation. — Sentiments and reasons of the whigs who had separated from Mr. Fox. — Motions for an inquiry into the management of the war and state of the nation — is negatived. — Parliamentary provisions for the approaching campaign. — Loan to the emperor. — Supplies. — Taxes. — Plan of Mr. Pitt for manning the navy. — Plan of Mr. Windham for the improvement of the militia. — Discussion of the late acquittals. — Statement of the affairs of the India company. — Marriage of the Prince of Wales to the Princess Caroline of Brunswick. — Provision for the establishment of their royal highnesses. — Arrangement for the payment of the prince's debts. — Application from the West India merchants. — Motion of Mr. Wilberforce for the abolition of the slave trade — is negatived. — Termination of Hastings's trial by an honourable acquittal. — Mr. Pitt declares his majesty's willingness to make peace, if attainable with security, without regard to the form of French government. — Irish affairs. — Lord Fitzwilliam viceroy. — Misunderstanding between ministers and him concerning the extent and bounds of his powers — he is recalled and succeeded by lord Camden. — Internal affairs of France. — The government of Robespierre the lowest abyss of revolutionary anarchy. — Commencing return of social order. — Constitution of 1795 — two councils, and an executive directory of five. — French politicians now convinced that a control of estates is necessary. — Death of the late king's son. - - - - - *Page* 108

CHAP. LVI.

Effects of the French successes upon other powers. — The grand duke of Tuscany and the king of Sweden acknowledge the French republic. — Character and views of the king of Prussia. — After receiving a subsidy from England, he abandons the alliance — and concludes a peace with France. — Spain compelled to receive peace from France. — German princes. — Extensive dominion of the French republic. — Renewal of the war in La Vendée. — The French emigrants in England fancy and represent royalism to prevail in France — plan of co-

operation with the royalists submitted to ministers — scheme adopted by them — expedition to Quiberon — disastrous issue of. — Requisition from Holland. — The French armies reduce the fortress of Luxemburgh, and complete the conquest of Belgium. — Campaign upon the Rhine — indecisive. Armistice of three months. — Naval operations. — Engagement of admiral Cornwallis with a much superior French force — by a stratagem he impels the enemy to fly. — Lord Bridport defeats the French fleet off L'Orient, and captures their largest ships. — Attempts of the French to recover their losses in the West Indies. — War in Jamaica with the Maroon negroes. — Admiral Hotham defeats the French off Corsica. — Admiral Elphinstone reduces the Cape of Good Hope. — Internal affairs of France. — Ambitious views of the leaders of the convention. — Efforts of Napoleon Bonaparte, a young Corsican officer, excite general admiration. — The moderates at length prevail. *Page* 145

CHAP. LVII.

Britain. — Many who had approved of the war, tire of its continuance — are disappointed in its results — they conceive the advantages gained do not balance the loss incurred. — Scarcity and dearness of provisions. — Discontents. — Active endeavours of the innovating societies. — Multiplication of lecturers — who represent wars as ministerial jobs for plundering the people. — Frequency of seditious meetings. — Meetings of the corresponding society at Chalk-farm and Copenhagen-house. — Abuse of government — Behaviour of the mob to the king in his way to and from parliament — a bullet is shot into the king's coach. — Indignation of the public. — Proclamation. — Proceedings of parliament. — Lord Grenville introduces a bill for the safety of his majesty's person — principle and details — arguments against it — for it. — Mr. Pitt's bill for preventing seditious meetings — objects and provisions of — arguments against it. — Mr. Fox reprobates the bills — exhibits the rights of the people to state their grievances — declares the bills intended to prevent the exercise of that right — and to shield ministers — he alleges, they subvert constitutional freedom. — Active efforts of him and his co-adjutors both in and out of parliament. — Petitions. — Arguments for Mr. Pitt's bill — required by the circumstances of the times — somewhat modified, both pass into laws. — Impartial view of the new acts. — Restrictions on the freedom of the press. — Mr. Pitt apprehended to undervalue literary effort. — Majority of the literary class inimical to his administration. — Writers represent the series of his measures as more conducive to the power of the crown than the rights of the

the people. — State of ministerial popularity. — Ministers intimate his majesty's disposition to open a negociation for peace — remarks of Mr. Fox on this declaration. — The conduct of the war is severely censured. — Supplies — immense loan. — The taxes financially judicious, laid on the luxuries or conveniencies, and not the necessaries, of life. — Able speech of earl Moira on revenue. — *Proposed* remonstrance of opposition. — Dissolution of parliament. *Page* 162

CHAP. LVIII.

Views of the belligerent powers. — French decree for the irrevocable annexation of Belgium to the republic. — Hopes of Britain and of Austria. — The governments of the contending countries are little disposed to peace — the people on both sides, desire to terminate the evils of war. — The respective governments profess a pacific disposition — indirect overtures of Britain to France — the answer of the French for the present prevents negociation. — Belligerent policy of the French government. — French objects of the campaign — La Vendée, Germany, and Italy. — The reduction of La Vendée. — Tendency of revolution to call forth abilities. — Numbers of able commanders who sprang up among the French. — This year displays an extraordinary general. — Bonaparte appointed to command the French army in Italy. — Numerous and well-disciplined army of the emperor — assisted by the Italian princes. — Inferior force of the French — Bonaparte commands the minds of his soldiers — he attacks and defeats the Austrians — repeated victories. — Bonaparte separates the Austrian and Piedmontese armies. — By a victory at Mondovi he compels the king of Sardinia to yield at discretion — who receives peace from his dictation. — Bonaparte surmounts the natural ramparts of Italy — wise measures to keep up the spirit of his troops. — Battle at the bridge of Lodi — signal exploit and victory of Bonaparte — he imitates the Romans in their rapacity as well as valour — but mingles conciliatory policy, especially towards the populace. — Conspiracies at the instance of the nobles and clergy — are disconcerted — and punished. — Bonaparte gains to his interest the men of genius and literature — and endeavours to bring every kind of talent into efficient action — result of his political efforts — he resumes military operations — marches from Italy towards Germany. — Wurmser takes the field with a fresh army of Austrians — is repulsed by the French. — Bonaparte invests Mantua — Wurmser approaches to its relief. — Bonaparte is surrounded at Lonado — he extricates himself by a stratagem, and induces a much superior army to surrender.

surrender. — Successive victories of Bonaparte — decisive victory at Arcola — capture of Mantua. — Commotions at Rome — conduct of the papal government — the pope attempts to make war against Bonaparte — the French general makes conciliatory overtures — reply of the pope — Bonaparte invades the Roman territories, and compels the pontiff to sue for a peace. — Amount of the French acquisitions in Italy in this campaign. — Political administration of Bonaparte. — Germany invaded by Jourdain and Moreau. — The archduke Charles — successive battles of, with Jourdain. — Danger of the empire — is warded off by the valour of the archduke — who compels Jourdain to evacuate Germany. — Progress and situation of Moreau — masterly and successful retreat in the face of the German host. — Britain continues signally successful where she fights alone — retakes St. Lucie — quells insurrections in the other islands — captures seven Dutch ships of the line in Saldanna bay — reduces Ceylon and other Dutch settlements in the East — judges it expedient to relinquish Corsica. — Ineffectual attempts of the French upon Ireland. — Internal events — birth of a princess, heir to the prince of Wales. — General election — the least contested of any in the eighteenth century. — British government proposes to send an ambassador to Paris to negociate a peace. — France agrees to receive a British ambassador. - *Page* 185

CHAP. LIX.

Meeting of the new parliament — the king announces pacific intentions. — Difference of opinion on this subject between ministers and the votaries of Burke. — Burke's publication against a peace with regicides. — Earl Fitzwilliam reprobates negotiation, unless monarchy be restored. — Ministers declare security attainable without the restoration of monarchy. — Opposition declare they do not believe the ministers really to desire peace. — Apprehensions of an invasion. — Powerful and extensive preparations for defence. — Law for establishing a militia in Scotland. — Army, navy, and pecuniary supplies. — Imposts begin to be severely felt by the lower and middling classes. — Negotiation of lord Malmsbury at Paris — basis proposed by Britain, reciprocal restitution — France will not relinquish Belgium — abruptly requires the ultimatum of the ambassador — which he is not empowed immediately to deliver — he is ordered to quit France. — British manifesto, charging France with the rupture. — Splendid eloquence of Mr. Pitt on this subject. — Mr. Erskine's view of the causes and consequences of the war. — Reasonings of Mr. Fox. — Motions for the removal of ministers — are negatived by great majorities. — Gloomy aspect of affairs at the commencement

ment of 1797 — enormous increase of national debt — advances and state of the bank — correspondence between the bank and ministers — alarms for public credit — fears of an invasion — unusual demand for specie — rapid decrease of cash in the bank — public agitation — application to government — order of council to suspend payments in cash — the subject is discussed in Parliament — opposition declare the bank to be in a state of insolvency from the infatuation of ministers — ministers allege, and the bank proves, its property far to exceed its engagements — bill to enable the bank to pay in notes instead of cash. — Complaints of the sailors — artifices of disaffected agitators — alarming mutiny at Portsmouth — is quieted by Lord Howe. — An augmentation of pay is granted by parliament. — More outrageous and dangerous mutiny at the Nore — Parker — the insurgents block up the Thames — alarm in London — the sailors at length return to obedience. — Parker tried and executed. — Law rendering the instigation of mutiny capital felony. — State of Ireland — lord Moira's proposed address to his Majesty on the subject — negatived. — Motion for parliamentary reform, and inquiries into the state of the nation — negatived. — Marriage of the prince of Wirtemberg to the princess royal of England — portion bestowed on her highness. — Parliament rises. - - - - - - - - - *Page* 217

CHAP. LX.

Campaign of 1797. — Operations in Italy — settlement of Italy — displays the political abilities of Bonaparte. — Address and versatility of Bonaparte — attempts to revolutionize the minds of the people — he marches against the Austrians. — The archduke Charles is appointed general of the Austrians. — Formidable armies of the archduke and Bonaparte. — After successive victories, Bonaparte advances towards Vienna — Bonaparte offers peace to Austria — a negotiation is opened. — Bonaparte changes the government of Venice — and of Genoa. — Treaty of Campo Formio — iniquitous disposal of the territories of Venice. — Britain only remains to combat the ambition of France. — France proposes to overmatch our navy, exhaust our finances, and excite rebellion — mighty preparations in the ports of Spain, France, and Holland — and plan of the naval campaign. — Distribution and disposition of the British navy — admiral Jervis encounters a Spanish fleet of superior force off St. Vincent's — able and dexterous scheme for dividing the enemy's force — bold and masterly execution — decisive and important victory — totally disconcerts the plans of the enemy. — Powerful armament *equipped*

equipped by the Dutch — proposes to join the French at Brest — opposed by admiral Duncan — battle off Camperdown — Duncan, fearless of a lee-shore, breaks the enemy's line — the British fleet gains a most brilliant victory. — Admirals Jervis and Duncan are called to adorn the peerage. — This year, repeating the lesson of former wars, shews France and her allies the futility of contending with the navy of England. — Internal state of France — the royalists revive alleged conspiracy — arrestation and banishment of the suspected persons without any proof. — New negotiation for peace — lord Malmsbury sent to Lisle — propositions on the part of Britain — preliminary requisitions of France — farther demands — propose entire restitution without any equivalent. — Lord Malmsbury declares so unreasonable a proposition totally inadmissible. — French temporise, and pretend a disposition to modification — dilatory pretexts of, until their internal changes were fixed — resume their proposition of restitution without any equivalent — Britain refuses such dishonourable conditions — lord Malmsbury ordered to depart. — The rupture of this negotiation unquestionably owing to France. — Causes of the hostile disposition of France. — Discontents in Scotland — misapprehension of the militia bill — riots — alarming tumults in Perthshire — illustrating the operation of democratic principles — leaders fortunately ignorant, though daring — riots quelled. - - - *Page* 244

CHAP. LXI.

State of public opinions and sentiments at the meeting of parliament. — Effects of British victories, and the haughty conduct of France. — Discontent is much less prevalent than in former years — the nation regards the continuance of war as unavoidable, and bravely resolve, to meet the exigency — the king publicly states the progress and rupture of the negotiation — the nation in general is disposed to support government. — Meeting of parliament — encouraged by the public sentiment, the minister adopts a new scheme of finance — he proposes to alleviate the funding system by raising a great part of the supplies within the year — and projects a multiplication of assessed taxes, which he presumes to be a criterion of income — details — arguments against and for — voluntary contributions proposed by Mr. Addington — the finance scheme is passed into a law — liberal contributions of all ranks and conditions — redemption of the land-tax — object to absorb a large quantity of funded stock — plan of national defence introduced by Mr. Dundas — voluntary associations — the whole nation becomes armed against foreign and domestic enemies — revival of the alien bill — apprehensions of

of an invasion — motion of the duke of Bedford for the removal of ministers — is negatived — prorogation of parliament. — Rebellion in Ireland — treatment of Ireland from the latter years of the American war — the penal statute against Catholics repealed — the Catholics desire a participation of political privileges, which is refused — effects of the French revolution — united Irishmen — Wolfe Tone — professed objects, reform in parliament, and catholic emancipation — real object — progress of — counter association of Orangemen — catholic defenders — French mission to Ireland — proposed plan of insurrection to facilitate a French invasion — apprehension of Jackson, and discoveries through him — hopes of the catholics from the appointment of lord Fitzwilliam — consequences of his recal — farther progress of the united Irishmen — they send ambassadors to France — vigilance of the British government — martial law is proclaimed — mission of Macnevin to France — his proposed scheme of military operations — the whig party propose conciliatory measures — which are rejected as inapplicable to the case — proclamations and proffers of pardon — are totally disregarded. — the united Irishmen concert measures for a general insurrection — disappointed by Duncan's defeat of the Dutch fleet — want of concert between the Irish conspirators and the French republic — arrestation of the delegates — hurries on rebellion before their designs were ripe — rebellion — insurgents near Dublin — are subdued — alarming insurrection in Wexford — successes of — at length are defeated — *rebellion is suppressed in the south — insurrection in the north — advances, but is subdued — lord Camden desires to be recalled* — marquis Cornwallis is appointed his successor — wise policy of — the French attempt to revive rebellion — are vanquished — squadron defeated by sir John Borlase Warren — Irish rebellion extinguished. - - - *Page* 270

CHAP. LXII.

French threats of an invasion — rouse the spirit, and stimulate the efforts of Britain — animated and energetic patriotism — the nation starts up in arms to defend their king, constitution, and country — against a people so disposed and so powerful, Bonaparte sees all attempts must be vain — France turns her ambition to less hopeless projects — grand scheme of distant conquest — expedition under Bonaparte — learned and philosophic attendants of the expedition — captures Malta, a neutral island — lands in Egypt — sir Horatio Nelson dispatched in pursuit of the French fleet — traverses the Mediterranean — descries them in Aboukir bay — dispositions for attack — emulous ardour of the British heroes — rapidity of movement — strong

strong position of the enemy, and collateral advantages. — Bold and surprising movement of the British — impetuous courage and extraordinary efforts of the French — in vain combat the naval heroism of England — decisive and splendid victory of Nelson — estimate of this achievement — political effects — extensive and momentous consequences of the battle of Aboukir — it stimulates all Europe to resist the ambition of France. — Affairs of Italy. — Russia — character of Paul. — internal regulations, external policy. — State of the American republic, as affected by revolutions and contests in Europe. . . . . *Page* 294

CHAP. LXIII.

Britain — effects of the late glorious campaign — discontent is silenced — ministers recover a high degree of popularity — meeting of parliament — grand objects, to provide for internal defence, strengthen the confederacy, and form an union with Ireland — supplies — income tax — objections and arguments for and against — subsidy to the emperor of Russia — arguments for and against — splendid speech of Mr. Pitt on the advantages which might be derived from the emperor Paul — powerful impression of on the house — the subsidy is granted — motion for peace — opposition reprobate a new confederacy — the motion is negatived — the professed object of war, security — great object of the British government to excite and invigorate a coalition against France. — Measures for the better administration of Ireland — Mr. Pitt's plan of union with Ireland submitted to parliament — arguments for and against — proposed to the Irish parliament — discussed — vehemently opposed in Ireland — literary efforts on both sides — renewed suspension of the Habeas Corpus act — inquiry into the state prisons — farther provisions for internal defence and security — parliament prorogued. . . . 310

CHAP. LXIV.

Congress at Rastadt — project of indemnities — principle, that the weaker should pay for the losses of the stronger, through the power of the strongest — new requisitions of the French — are resisted — war — French plan of the campaign — plan of the confederates — the French armies invade Germany — and the Grisons — under Jourdain and Massena — battle between the archduke Charles and Jourdain — the French are defeated, and forced to evacuate Germany — advances of Massena to the Grisons — by the defeat of Jourdain he is obliged to retreat — Austrians invade Italy — successes — reduce

reduce the north-east of Italy — arrival of marshal Suwarrow with a Russian army — military operations and victories — affairs of Naples — French evacuate the south, and concentrate their force in the north of Italy — battle of Novi — Italy all reduced except Genoa — campaign in Switzerland and the Grisons — successes of the Austrians — French driven from the Grisons — Massena begins to restore the affairs of the French — defeats Korsakow the Russian general — Suwarrow marches into Switzerland — not properly supported by the Austrians — retires with the Russians towards Germany. — Naval transactions by the British in co-operation with the allies in Italy — the British fleets block up the ports of Holland, France, and Spain. — Expedition of the duke of York to Holland — its purposes — well-grounded hopes of success — plan of co-operation between Great Britain and Russia. — British armament sails — troops land at the Helder — battle and victory — Dutch fleet surrenders — successive battles and victories of the British troops — advance to Alkmaer — battle at Limnen — indecisive — successes in the Zuyder Zee — British army obliged to fall back — difficult situation of the army — suspension of arms — British troops withdrawn from Holland. — Short meeting of parliament in September — supplies — prorogued. - - - - *Page* 331

CHAP. LXV.

Ultimate purpose of the French expedition to Egypt — their views concerning India. — Tippoo Sultan recovers a considerable part of his former strength — forms a new confederacy for driving the English from India — his schemes are discovered, and he is admonished by the British government to relinquish his projects — disregards the admonition — British armies from the two coasts take the field — Tippoo retires into Seringapatam — British army storm that city — death of Tippoo and reduction of Mysore — humane and wise policy of the British governor. — Proceedings in Egypt — situation of Bonaparte after the battle of Aboukir — difficulties with which he had to contend — exercise his extraordinary genius — military progress — battle of the pyramids — he addresses the passions and prejudices of the Egyptians — he promises the French will protect them from the Mamalukes — he professes a respect for the Mahomedan faith — plan of Bonaparte to amalgamate the prejudices of the Mahomedans with the pretensions of the French — his undertaking more difficult than the undertaking of Mahomet. — Civil and political administration — his innovations are disregarded by many of the Egyptians — discontents — are quelled — Bonaparte propose to march into Syria — object of this design — march and progress

progress of the French army — Bonaparte defeats the Syrians — captures Joppa — advances towards Acre — state and importance of that fortress — situation — the French army invests the city — sir Sidney Smith, with a British squadron, arrives at Acre — captures a French flotilla — he perceives the importance of here repressing the progress of the French — his masterly view of the situation of affairs — his first purpose to inspirit the Turks — he diffuses moral energy into their physical strength — the French effect breaches in the wall — assaults on the town — inspirited and headed by the English, the Turks repel the attack — grand assault by the French — Smith employs his sailors as soldiers — efficacious efforts and example of this heroic band — the French are entirely vanquished — retreat from Acre — Bonaparte returns to Egypt — the Turks send an army to Aboukir, but are defeated — measures of Bonaparte for the improvement of Egypt. . . . . *Page* 361

CHAP. LXVI.

Internal affairs of France — the directory becomes unpopular — the revival of the system of terror threatened — Bonaparte unexpectedly arrives from Egypt — character and views of the abbé Sieyes — popularity of Bonaparte — he is adored by the army — plan of a new constitution — Bonaparte is invested with the command of the army — the legislative bodies translated to St. Cloud — Bonaparte's address to the army — he enters the council of elders — and is favourably received — opposed in the council of five hundred — but is seconded by grenadiers with bayonets — the partisans of Bonaparte pray for his assistance, to enable them to deliberate peaceably — the grenadier guards remove the refractory members — dissolution of the legislature — new constitution — Bonaparte is chosen chief consul — offers peace to his Britannic majesty. — Britain — gloomy prospect — people again wish for peace — meeting of parliament — proposals of the consul to our king — answer rejecting his proposals — submitted to parliament — arguments of ministers, insincerity and instability of Bonaparte — of opposition, that Bonaparte is disposed and competent to make peace — the rejection of the overtures is approved by great majorities — German subsidies — motion for an inquiry into the expedition to Holland — rejected by a great majority — progress of the intended union with Ireland — proposed articles — arguments for and against — the plan of union, and time of commencement are finally fixed by both parliaments — dearness of provisions — corn and bread bill — bill of lord Auckland concerning

cerning the marriage of divorced persons — the Duke of Clarence's view of the subject — arguments for and against — is rejected — warmly engages the public attention. — Attempt at the theatre to assassinate our sovereign — is found to arise from lunacy — anxious alarm of the public — amendment of the insanity bill — parliament rises. - - *Page* 389

CHAP. LXVII.

France — conciliatory efforts of Bonaparte — he invites the emigrants to return — insurrection not entirely crushed — he reduces the royalists' army of reserve. — State of the confederates and of France — plan of the campaign — state of affairs in Italy — the Austrians invest Genoa — assisted by the British fleet — gallant defence of the republicans — Massena is permitted to evacuate Genoa. — Bonaparte prepares to restore the French affairs in Italy — Moreau invades Germany — his able manœuvres to divert the enemy, while he assisted the army of Italy. — Bonaparte takes the field to retrieve the affairs of the French in Italy — rapid and astonishing march over the Alps — progress in Italy — battle of Marengo — danger of the consular army — means of extrication — signal victory — decides the fate of Italy — armistice between the chief consul and the Austrian commander — Italy surrenders to Bonaparte — measures of Bonaparte for settling the country — having effected his purpose, Bonaparte returns to Paris. — Moreau advances into Bavaria — armistice, and overtures for peace. — The emperor receives a new subsidy from England — proposes to include Britain in the negociation — Bonaparte refuses — prolongation of the armistice — expiration, and renewal of hostilities — operations — partial successes of the Austrians — battle of Hohenlinden — the French gain a decisive victory — the emperor sues for peace — review of this extraordinary campaign — war is terminated between France and Austria. — Operations of the British forces — expedition on the coast of France — attempt on Ferrol — on Cadiz — reduction of Malta — Egypt — convention for the evacuation of it by the French — guaranteed by Sir Sidney Smith — ministers, not knowing this guarantee, refuse to ratify the convention — Kleber, the French general, renews hostilities — new negociation is broken off. — West Indies — capture of Curaçoa. — East Indies — wise administration of the governor-general. *Page* 416

CHAP. LXVIII.

ritain — high price of provisions — riots in September — disturbance in London — vigour and activity of the volunteer associations — the tumults are quelled without bloodshed. — Negociations for peace with France — French propositions deemed inadmissible by Britain. — Last meeting of the British parliament — inquiries concerning the price of corn — the scarcity is, by opposition, imputed to the war, which ministers deny — propositions for the interference of the legislature in the price of corn — rejected with great disapprobation — regulations for diminishing consumption, and encouraging importation — discussion of the late negociation — supplies. — State of affairs at the meeting of the united parliament — disputes with the northern powers — public law of Europe, relative to belligerent and neutral nations. — Conduct of the northern powers — Denmark and Sweden — discussion with Denmark. — Russia — rise and progress of Paul's enmity to Britain — interest of all nations to cultivate peace with Britain — efforts of Bonaparte to promote the hostile intentions of Paul towards England — lawless acts of Paul — embargo on British shipping. — Northern confederacy — the subject is discussed in the united parliament — unexpected change of ministry. — Short review of the late eventful administration — Mr. Pitt's situation the most arduous of any recorded in the history of cabinets — new administration — alarming illness of the king — anxious concern of the people — recovery. — Inquiries concerning the last campaign — supplies — loans — taxes — additional imposts upon paper — effects of — liberal and wise bill of lord Moira, for the relief of insolvent debtors — farther regulations for encouraging the importation of wheat — session rises.

Page 434.

CHAP. LXIX.

The king of Prussia promotes the northern confederacy — short-sighted policy of an attempt to intimidate Britain. — Project of Britain respecting the northern powers — expedition to the Baltic under sir Hyde Parker and lord Nelson — dispositions and force of the northern confederates — our armament arrives in the Cattegate — passes the Sound — Parker resolves to attack the Danes — Nelson offers his services to conduct the attack — battle of Copenhagen — and victory of Nelson — the victorious admiral proposes an armistice — the prince of Denmark agrees — amicable negociation. — Sweden. — Russia — death of Paul — conduct of Alexander — his negociation with Britain — amicable adjustment between Britain and

and the northern powers. — Proceedings of Bonaparte — Germany — Italy — naval campaign — enterprise of sir James Saumarez — threats of an invasion — destruction of the gun-boats. — Egypt — the French still keep possession — Britain resolves to dispossess them — expedition under sir Ralph Abercrombie and lord Keith for that purpose — arrives at Rhodes — proceeds to Egypt — lands at Aboukir — battle and victory — storm the fortress — advance towards Alexandria — Menou projects a night attack — executes it March 21st — surrounds the British forces — Bonaparte's invincibles — British 42d regiment — character of that corps — surprised and encompassed — rally — cut their way through triple their number — exploits of other regiments — heroism of the whole army — death of sir Ralph Abercrombie — enemy repulsed with dreadful slaughter — never afterwards venture to face the British troops in the field — general Hutchinson succeeds to the command — operations of — Cairo surrenders to the British arms — capitulation of Alexandria, and the evacuation of Egypt, finally accomplish the purposes of the expedition. — Measures of the new ministry — they are disposed to peace — negociations — progress of — believed about to terminate unfavourably — the nation apprehensive of the continuance of war — preliminaries of peace signed — national joy, though general, not universal. — Conclusion of this work. - - - - - *Page* 455

HISTORY

OF THE

REIGN OF GEORGE III.

CHAP. LII.

Overtures of the French government for peace with Britain. — Le Brun, the minister, proposes to send an ambassador to England. — Letters containing his propositions are delivered to Lord Grenville — but receive no answer. — Alarming state of France — at war with all her neighbours. — Intestine war in La Vendée. — The victorious allies invade the French dominions. — Battle at St. Amand between the allies and the French. — The Duke of York and the British troops take a share in the action. — British soldiers supremely excellent in close fight — in spite of French numbers and artillery by the bayonet decide the fate of the day. — Battle of Famars and the defeat of the French. — Blockade and surrender of Condé. — Siege of Valenciennes — strength of the fortress — operations — taken after a siege of six weeks. — Successes on the Rhine. — Mentz taken by the Prussian army. — France torn by dissensions. — Mountain excite a clamour against the Brissotines. — Establishment of the revolutionary tribunal. — Brissotines, with distinguished speculative ability, deficient in practical talents. — Mountain superior in decision and daring atrocity. — Brissot, Roland, and their supporters, seized and committed to prison. — Robespierre and his associates become rulers of France. — System of terror reigns. — Constitution of 1793. — Singular absurdity and anarchy. — Committees of public and general safety. — Combination in the South

for overthrowing the frightful tyranny. — Toulon puts itself under the protection of lord Hood and the British fleet. — Comprehensive and efficacious malignity of the governing junto. — Robespierre and his band abolish Christianity — publicly and nationally abjure the Supreme Being — proscribe genius, destroy commerce, confiscate remaining property — debase every kind of excellence — attempt to level all civil, political, and moral distinctions. The pressure of the war facilitates their atrocities. — Forced loans — requisitions. — Bold scheme of the war minister to raise the nation in mass. — Efficacy of this system — confounds all calculations of the allied powers — overcomes the insurgents of La Vendée — forces the British to seek safety by evacuating Toulon. — Netherlands. — Activity and progress of the Duke of York and the British troops. — Victory at Lincennes — invests Dunkirk with reasonable hopes of success.

CHAP. LII.

ABOUT the time that Dumouriez engaged in a negociation with Cobourg for the re-establishment of monarchy, the existing government of France made an attempt to procure the restoration of peace. The proposals were conveyed through a very unusual channel: Le Brun, the French minister, employed Mr. James Matthews, an Englishman of whom he had no knowledge but what Matthews gave himself, to carry to London two letters[a] addressed to lord Grenville, and a third to Mr. John Salter, attorney, then a vestry clerk to the parish, since a notary public in Penny's Fields, Poplar, recommended by Matthews, requesting him to deliver the two letters to the British secretary. The purport of the first was, that the French republic desired to terminate all differences with Great Britain, and that he demanded a passport for a person to repair from France to Britain for that purpose. The second mentioned Mr. Maret as the person who was to be deputed, and claimed a safe conduct for him and

1793. Overtures for peace by Le Brun the French minister.

He proposes to send an ambassador to Britain.

[a] Dated at Paris, April 2d, 1793, and delivered to lord Grenville 26th April, 1793. See State Papers.

his

his necessary attendants. Mr. Salter accepted the commission, as he had probably agreed with Matthews; and on the 26th of April, 1793, delivered the two letters to lord Grenville, at his office, Whitehall. The letters procured no attention, and produced no effect: they never, like other overtures for negociation, were the subjects of parliamentary discussion; and the literary notice which they excited was inconsiderable. The partisans of war regarded the uncommonness of the agency as a sufficient reason for overlooking the propositions.[b] The votaries of peace did not view the advances in that light, but from their general and cursory account, appear to have thought the transaction of little importance[c], and are totally unacquainted with the causes and circumstances of a mode of conveyance so different from the established etiquettes of diplomatic communication. The real history of this mission the kind information of Mr. David Williams has enabled me to lay before the reader.

CHAP. LII.

1793. Letters from him are delivered to lord Grenville, but receive no answer.

The literary celebrity of Mr. Williams, and the use which the French reformers had made of his "Letters on Political Liberty," induced the Girondists to invite him to France, that he might assist them in the formation of a [d] constitution. Brissot, whom he describes as an honest but a weak man, he had known in England, had corresponded with him, and warned him of the danger which he was incurring by his violence. Repairing to Paris, he became intimate with Condorcet, Roland, and other political leaders of the times. He continued to admonish them of the

Circumstances and history of these proffers of conciliation.

[b] See Otridge's Annual Register for 1793; a volume which, having evidently taken a side, I prize less as an authority than any of the other volumes of the same work, which, loyally and patriotically supporting our constitution, record and estimate measures with the dignified impartiality of authentic history.

[c] See Belsham's History, vol. v. p. 47.

[d] See Madame Roland's Appeal; and Public Characters for 1798, page 472.

CHAP. LII. 1793.

evils which they would encounter, unless they could moderate the licentiousness of the populace, and suppress the faction of the jacobins. He saw the wildness and extravagance of the Girondists themselves, and strongly represented to Brissot the impracticability and madness of rousing and uniting the nation by war. He powerfully inculcated the necessity of peace and moderation, to the welfare of the people, and the security of any constitution which might be formed for that purpose: he particularly recommended the maintenance of peace with England, and strongly reprobated the prosecution and death of the king, as giving the populace a taste of blood. Eager as the Brissotines were for war, yet they were conscious that France was not prepared for hostilities with England: patriotic policy sometimes overcame revolutionary fury, and then they would listen to the pacific counsels of Mr. Williams. When the discussions between Mr. Chauvelin and lord Grenville were evidently tending to hostility, they asked Mr. Williams to undertake a mission to the British court, in order to effect an accommodation. Regarding such an office as not altogether suitable to a British subject, especially in the fluctuation of sentiment which the French government exhibited on the questions of peace and war, he declined the mission. Still, however, he conceived that peace might be preserved: the same opinion was expressed to him by members of the Girond; and it was with great surprise, on the 1st of February, that he heard the convention declare war by *acclamation* against Britain and Holland. Mr. Williams now resolved to return to his country: still Le Brun and other members of the French government professed to him their wishes for the restoration of peace; and since he would not himself undertake a mission, that minister asked him to bear a letter to lord Grenville, which requested the British

British government to open the ports of Dover and Calais; in the postscript declared the French government to desire the re-establishment of peace, proposed to send a minister, and stated that Mr. Williams was empowered to explain their principle and project of conciliation, so as to be satisfactory to the British government. Mr. Williams returned to Britain, repaired to the secretary of state's office, delivered his letter [c], and mentioned his readiness to wait on lord Grenville whenever his lordship should appoint; but he was never sent for by the secretary, and there his commission ended. Mr. Williams himself appears to me to think that the French were already convinced of their precipitation in declaring war, and would have willingly agreed to the terms which lord Grenville had required from Chauvelin, if they found the British government equally disposed to return to amity; but as no opportunity was afforded him of an audience from lord Grenville, neither his statements nor deductions could be of any avail to the purpose of the commission with which he was charged.

CORRESPONDENCE between Britain and France being now precluded, Le Brun heard nothing from Mr. Williams. While Mr. Williams had been at Paris, there went thither a Mr. James Matthews, who professed great regard and veneration for Mr. Williams, was frequently in his company, and had thereby opportunities of knowing the names and persons of some members of the French government, but was not introduced to any of these rulers. The inauspicious commencement of the compaign between France and the allies disappointed the republicans; and the desertion of Dumouriez added treachery as a fresh ground of alarm to the apprehensions that were entertained

[c] See State Papers.

from

CHAP. LII. 1795.

from the British and Austrians. Perhaps these considerations rendered the French government more anxious for peace, or perhaps they might profess anxiety without being sincere: whatever was the motive, they certainly did repeat the attempt; and this Mr. Matthews was the person, on the mere pretence of being Mr. Williams's confidant, that was appointed to carry the second overtures to England. Why Mr. Le Brun chose Mr. Salter to be the deliverer of the dispatches sent by Mr. Matthews I have not learned, or why Mr. Matthews did not deliver them himself, he not being in a state of mind to answer such questions. Indeed, the whole transaction; Mr. Matthews's application to Le Brun as the confidant of Mr. Williams; the appointment of Mr. Salter, then vestry-clerk of the parish of Poplar, to convey the letters to Grenville; and the assurances of Matthews, who brought the letters, that he should instantly make peace, and provide for all his friends (in which, however, Mr. Williams was not mentioned), can be accounted for only from an incipient derangement of mind, the symptoms of which soon appeared, and for which he has been ever since confined. Mr. Matthews was chosen to be the bearer, not as an obscure and unconnected individual, but from being conceived by the French government to have the confidence of Mr. Williams. Mr. Williams they had first wished, in their extravagant manner, to be, in effect, an ambassador; and finding he would not accept that general mission, they prevailed on him to be the bearer of specific proposals, which they professed to think conducive to peace. Thence came Mr. Matthews to be employed in the SECOND application which the French government, within the first three months of the war, made for the re-establishment of peace. That the republicans were sincere in these proffers it would be very rash to affirm. Against their sincerity

cerity there were the series of Brissotine menaces of universal warfare; the tendency and character of the revolutionary enthusiasm: for their sincerity there were the actual disappointments which they were experiencing, and the farther disasters which they *then* appeared likely to suffer. Perhaps they might be sincere in desiring peace with Britain, in order to facilitate their schemes of ambition against other countries; but those schemes of ambition had been formed in the exultation of unexpected success, and might not be cherished at the season of discomfiture and retreat. From the correspondence between Grenville and Chauvelin, they well knew that no proposal would be admitted by Britain which did not renounce the navigation of the Scheldt, forbear interference with the internal affairs of other countries, and forego their projects of aggrandizement: if they intended to offer less, their overtures, therefore, would have been futile; but it cannot [f] be ascertained whether their offers would or would not have been satisfactory, according to our requisition of satisfaction, since they were not *heard*. The intervention of a vestry clerk has been stated as ridiculous; but Le Brun did not propose Mr. Salter as a negociator, he employed him as a courier for carrying an offer of sending as ambassador Mr. Maret, who had a few months before conferred and negociated with Mr. Pitt.

CHAP. LII. 1793.

THE situation of France was at this time extremely alarming; she was at war with her three most powerful neighbours, Prussia, Austria, and Britain. A body of her bravest sons, stimulated by the strongest resentment, was joined to her formidable enemies. The states of Holland, and principalities of Germany, though not very important in their separate force, yet added to the impulse which was already so great. Sardinia, Naples, and Spain, were em-

Alarming state of France; at war with all her neighbours.

[f] On this part of my enquiries Mr. W. declined any particular explanation. He was writing on the subject himself.

CHAP. LII. 1793.

barked in the same cause. From the Texel to the straits of Gibraltar, from Gibraltar to Shetland, there was a circle of enemies encompassing [5] France. Within her territories there were numerous bodies eagerly desirous of co-operating with her foes from without: a formidable rebellion was broken out in La Vendée, and the French government, divided into two violent factions, appeared on the eve of destruction by an intestine war. These concurring circumstances seemed to justify the hopes of the confederacy, that France, surrounded by so many enemies, and rent by such convulsions, would be unable to resist their separate and united efforts: but the French republicans were not overwhelmed by the multiplicity of dangers. The national convention, informed of the arrestation of their commissioners, and the defection of Dumouriez, manifested that rapid energy which ever distinguished the French revolutionists in emergency and danger, and adopted efficient measures to preserve the tranquillity of the metropolis, and defend the frontiers against the invading host. The northern army was re-organised, and general Dampierre being re-appointed provisional commander-in-chief, re-occupied the camp at Famars in French Hainault, near the right bank of the Scheldt. The confederate army was posted at Kieverain on the frontiers of Austrian Hainault, with their right extending to St. Amand, and their left to Bavie, so

[5] The people, from having such a multiplicity of enemies, conceived themselves at war with the whole world: the following incident that occurred to a captain of the navy, a near relation of mine, is a curious illustration of these sentiments. On the 22d of March arrived at Portsmouth from Jamaica, the Falcon sloop of war, captain Bisset, having captured off Ushant a French privateer. Captain Bisset was not apprised of a war between this country and France, till he fell in with the above privateer, who bore down upon the Falcon, but perceiving her to be a sloop of war, she immediately hauled her wind, and fired her stern. Captain Bisset, astonished at this conduct, instantly stood after her, and coming up with her, demanded the reason of such conduct; when he was told by the commander of the privateer, "*that France had declared war against all the world.*" The Falcon then fired a few guns, and the French ship struck her colours, and was taken possession of by the Falcon.

as

as to blockade Condé, threaten Valenciennes, and even to overawe Maubeuge. The French general proposed to drive the allies from so advantageous a position, and to relieve Condé. On the 1st of May he began the execution of this design, by attempting to dislodge the Austrians from several villages which they possessed, but was repulsed with the loss of near a thousand killed and wounded. Dampierre, undismayed by this check, and encouraged by reinforcements which were just arrived, marched on a second time, with three formidable columns against the Prussian lines at St. Amand, and maintained a long, severe, and bloody contest, till succours from the Austrians under Clairfait, obliged him to make a precipitate retreat, after leaving two thousand men on the field of battle. His immediate object being to relieve Condé, he still threatened the Prussians, who were now joined by the British troops under the duke of York. Intending to confine his attack to the right wing, he feigned an intention of assailing the whole line; and advancing to the wood of Vicoigne, he began the charge. On his left were constructed several strong batteries, where were posted ten thousand men drawn from the garrison of Lisle. Against this numerous force the Coldstream guards, with some other British troops, were dispatched. This heroic band, regardless of numbers, checked the enemy's batteries with their field-pieces; and after one discharge of musketry, rushed forward with fixed bayonets. Terrible in every species of warfare, British soldiers are irresistible in close fight; when no dexterity can elude the force of personal prowess; and hence the opportunity of charging bayonets has rarely failed to assure victory to our countrymen. Our combatants made an impression on their antagonists, which the French soon saw they could not withstand man to man; they had, therefore, recourse to their chief excellence, missiles;

British soldiers supremely excellent in close fight;

in spite of French numbers and artil-

CHAP. LII.

siles; with rapid activity they wheeled round artillery from the front to the flank, and opened with grape-shot upon the gallant English. Dreadfully annoyed, the British forces disdained to fly: they kept their ground, repulsed the multitudes of the enemy, and in the conflict mortally wounded Dampierre.[h] The French had gone forth to battle in the most assured confidence, thinking they had only Prussian tactics and intrepidity to oppose their rapidly active genius and valour; but finding it was a very different undertaking to combat the energy of British heroism; they retreated within their lines, nor afterwards attempted offensive operations in a quarter secured by so formidable champions. From this period to the 23d of May, the French did not venture out of their lines; the allies, on the other hand, encouraged by the impression which was made by the action of the 8th, resolved to make a general attack on the camp at Famars, that covered the approaches to Valenciennes. The dispositions for this grand object being finished, the 23d of May was fixed for executing the design. At day-break the British and Hanoverians assembled under the command of the duke of York; and the Austrians and German auxiliaries under the prince of Cobourg and general Clairfait. Great pains had been employed to conceal the projected attack, until its execution should be commenced. A fog somewhat retarded the advance of the troops, but at the same time concealed their approaches; until the sun penetrating through the mist displayed to the astonished French the allies in four columns, proceeding towards their camp. A tremendous fire of artillery began the action on both sides: the contest soon became closer; and one of the Austrian columns was nearly overpowered, when the Hanoverians and British repulsed its assailants: at length the

1793. lery, by the bayonet decide the fate of the day.

Battle of Famars.

[h] New Annual Register, 1795.

combined

combined troops, led by the British, and headed by the duke of York and general Abercrombie, entirely defeated the French army. During night the duke of York refreshed his forces, resolved to attack the enemy's fortifications the next morning; but in the night the republicans abandoned the entrenchments which they had formed with such pains and expence, and left the way open to Valenciennes. About the same time bodies of Dutch and Austrian troops employed in the maritime Netherlands, drove the French invaders on that side within their frontiers.

Blockade and surrender of Condé.

CONDE, as we have seen, was in a state of blockade: the town was not provided with a sufficient quantity of provisions to sustain a long siege: the governor (general Chancel), therefore, about this period ordered the women and children to quit the place. As the diminution of consumers tended to prolong a blockade, the prince of Wirtemberg, who commanded on that service, would not suffer their departure; opposed and prevented repeated attempts. The besieged, after a very brave and obstinate resistance, and enduring with the most persevering fortitude all the rigours of famine, were, on the 10th of July, obliged to surrender at discretion.

Siege of Valenciennes.

But a much more arduous enterprise, undertaken by the allies, was the siege of Valenciennes; and the victory at Famars having enabled them to approach, they formed a regular investment. Valenciennes is situate on the left bank of the Scheldt, opposite to the camp which the French had recently occupied.

Strength of the fortress.

Its fortifications, among the chief efforts of Vauban's genius, rendered it a post of extraordinary strength. The garrison consisted of about eleven thousand men: Custine, appointed on the death of Dampierre to take the command of the Northern army, found it impossible to relieve the fortress, which was therefore obliged to depend upon its own strength. The allies, conscious of their

CHAP. LII.

1793.

their force, and confident of ultimate success, summoned the fortress to surrender: the summons was disregarded; and being repeated, was still unavailing: the allies, therefore, proceeded with their approaches. A difference of opinion prevailed between the two chief engineers of Britain and of the emperor respectively, colonel Moncrief and monsieur Ferasis. The British officer, less regarding customary modes than efficient means, proposed to plant batteries immediately under the walls of the city, instead of approaching it by regular [j] parallels. The German officer, adhering closely to experimental tactics, proposed to proceed in the manner which had been so long in use; and his opinion was adopted by the council of war. On the morning of the 14th of June the trenches were opened; and Ferasis directed the siege under the superintending command of the Duke of York. The successive parallels were conducted with distinguished skill, and finished with uncommon expedition; this dispatch being powerfully promoted by the British guards; who, from their habits of working in the coal barges on the Thames, were enabled to do more work in a given time than an equal number of any other soldiers. [k] In the beginning of July the besiegers were able to bring two hundred pieces of heavy artillery to play without intermission on the town, and the greater part of it was reduced to ashes. The smallness of the garrison, compared with the extent of the fortifications to be defended, prevented general Ferrand, the commander, from attempting frequent sorties: in one which the garrison made on the 5th of July, however, they were very successful, killed several of the enemy, and spiked some cannon. A considerable part of the war was carried on under ground, by numerous mines and counter-mines, which both besiegers and

Operations

[j] New Annual Register, 1793, page 187.
[k] See Macfarlane, vol. iv. page 390.

besieged

besieged constructed. The chief of these were, one which the besiegers formed under the glacis, and one under the horn-work of the fortress.[1] These mines were completed and charged on the 25th of July, and in the night, between nine and ten o'clock, were sprung with complete success. The English and Austrians immediately embraced the opportunity to throw themselves into the covered way, of which they made themselves masters. The duke of York now, for the third time, summoned the place to surrender; and the governor seeing no hopes from farther defence, capitulated; by the capitulation the troops taken in the garrison were allowed to retire into France, on swearing that they would not during the war, serve against any of the allied powers; and the duke of York took possession of Valenciennes in the name of the emperor of Germany.

CHAP. LII. 1793.

Captured, after a siege of six weeks, in the name of the emperor.

THOSE promoters of war, with the French republicans, who desired the restoration of monarchy as the chief object of hostilities, disapproved of various circumstances in the capture of Valenciennes, and indeed in the principle on which the campaign was conducted; as, according to their hypothesis, the legitimate object of the war in which the confederacy was engaged was the re-establishment of monarchy, the emigrant princes and other exiles ought to have had the chief direction in its councils and conduct; whereas these were really employed as mercenaries. On the same hypothesis, Valenciennes and other towns captured, or to be captured, ought to be possessed in the name of Louis XVII. as King of France, and of his uncle the count of Provence, as lawful regent during the young king's minority; and troops capitulating ought to be restricted from serving against French royalists, as well as the allied powers. These observations were

Sentiments of Burke and his votaries on this subject,

[1] New Annual Register, 1793, page 190.

fair

CHAP. LII. 1793.

fair and consistent inferences, if it had been admitted that the combined powers were actually, as the English opposition asserted, fighting for the restoration of the monarchical constitution [m]: but according to British ministers, and the greater number of their parliamentary votaries, the purpose of the war was not a counter-revolution in France, but the attainment of security against the French projects of aggrandisement, and dissemination of revolt; that the most effectual means for this purpose was the reduction of her power, without any regard to her internal government; that we were to reduce her strength, in the present as in former wars, by capturing, according to our respective force, her towns and possessions. Indeed, the confederates at present seemed to proceed on the same principle of conquering warfare which had been practised by the grand alliance for humbling the power of Louis XIV. To adopt the language of works less specially devoted to the support of ministerial politics, than to the restoration of monarchy in France; they were rather *anti-gallicans*, warring against physical France, on the general principles of former times, than *anti-jacobins*, warring against moral France, on the peculiarly requisite principles of present times. On the one hand, the object of Mr. Burke, however impolitic and impracticable it may have been deemed, was much more definite than the objects of Mr. Pitt, as far as these were explained: on the other, the objects of Mr. Pitt being conceived to be merely anti-gallican, were much more agreeable to the prevailing sentiments of Britons than the avowal of a combination would have been, for interfering in the internal polity of France, and re-establishing a government which, in its former exercise, Britain so very much

are different from those of Mr. Pitt and his co-adjutors.

[m] The most eloquent and illustrious advocate of this doctrine, Mr. Burke, exhibits this theory in his remarks on the policy of the allies, begun in October 1793.

disapproved.

disapproved. The capture of French towns in the name of the young prince, as sovereign of a country that had renounced its authority, would have been an avowal of a counter-revolutionary project, which the British government disavowed, and which the majority of the British nation would have censured. The appropriation and capitulation of Valenciennes were therefore perfectly consonant to the professed views with which the allies, having completed the purposes of defence and recovery, had invaded the French Netherlands. While the allies were thus engaged in the Netherlands in strengthening the power of the emperor on the Rhine, they were occupied in recovering the captures of the French. On the 20th of June the Prussian army invested Mentz; and after a regular and vigorous siege, and a very gallant defence, it capitulated on the 22d of July.

Successes of the Prussians. Mentz is taken.

WHILE the confederates were making such advances on the frontiers of France, the republic was entirely torn with dissensions. The Girondists, who had been long declining in authority, and who were more than ever abhorred by the Mountain, since their desire to save the king, and constantly supported Dumouriez against the invectives of Marat and the jacobins. As soon as Dumouriez was driven into exile, the Mountain raised an outcry against his late protectors the Girondists. They were represented to the furious multitude as a band of traitors and counter-revolutionists. The municipality of Paris, and the jacobin clubs, resounded with complaints, threats, and imprecations, against the party in the convention which retained some sentiments of humanity, some love of order, and some regard for justice. The Girond party still possessed considerable influence in the convention; but the Mountain, gratifying the Parisian rabble with blood and plunder, exercised the supreme command

France is torn by dissensions.

The Mountain excite a clamour against the Girondists.

CHAP. LII.

mand in the city. In March was established the revolutionary tribunal for trying offences against the state. This celebrated and dreadful court, consisting of six judges, was wholly without appeal. The crimes on which it was to pronounce were vague, undefined, and undefinable; extending not merely to actions, but to most secret thoughts. On the 1st of April a decree was passed abolishing the inviolability of members of the convention when accused of crimes against the state.

1793. Establishment of the revolutionary tribunal.

The Girondists possessed a speculative ingenuity, but wanted practical ability.

THE chiefs of the Brissotines appeared to be astonished and confounded at these daring and desperate measures of their inveterate adversaries, confident in their power and popularity; and made no vigorous opposition to decrees which were evidently intended to pave the way to their[n] destruction. It was now manifest that the Girondists were inferior to their antagonists in vigour and decision; and, notwithstanding the intellectual and literary accomplishments of the leaders of the party, grossly deficient in practical talents for government; that, therefore, they must finally sink under the contest of which they were unequal to the management.

The Mountain superior in decision and daring atrocity.

The Mountain had not only in its favour the jacobin club and the dregs of the people of Paris, but it knew that the triumphant party, in that immense city, from terror or obedience, was able to command throughout the whole extent of the republic; and whilst the Girondists were reasoning, deliberating, and menacing, the Mountain conspired, struck, and reigned. On the 31st of May, early in the morning, the tocsin was sounded; the barriers were shut; Brissot, Roland, and many others of the most distinguished Girondists were seized and committed to prison by a force devoted to Robespierre. Terror quickly seized all minds; and

The Girond leaders are committed to prison.

[n] See Belsham's History, vol. v. p. 62.

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CHAP. LII.

1793.

the theoretic republic of ingenious, but unwise and unprincipled innovators, became subject to a detestable and bloody tyranny. Robespierre, Danton, Marat, Collet d'Herbois, Billaud, and Couthon, became rulers of France. They associated with themselves ferocious individuals whose talents were necessary to the administration, and who consented to serve them through fear, ambition, or [o] policy. They hastily drew up the celebrated constitution of 1793; and no policy ever existed more absurd, or more favourable to anarchy. Legislation was confined to a single council, the members of which were elected without any qualification of property: the executive power was among twenty-four ministers, appointed by the convention, and dismissed at their pleasure. This government, the most absolute and the most ferocious of which there has ever been an example, was confined to two sections, consisting of twelve deputies. The one was called the *Committee of Public Safety*, and the other the *Committee of General Safety*. They were to be renewed every month; but by one of the incalculable effects of fear, which blinds those whom it governs, the convention, divesting itself of its inviolability, entrusted the committees with the formidable right of imprisoning its members; and thus rendered the power of the government as solid as it was extensive. Meanwhile, some of the Girondist deputies who escaped the proscription excited insurrection. Several departments indicated a disposition to avenge themselves, and resist oppression: some of them took up arms. By far the most formidable resistance to the reigning usurpers arose in the South, where the three principal cities, Lyons, Marseilles, and Toulon, formed a combination for overturning the existing tyranny.

Robespierre and his associates become rulers of France. System of terror reigns. Constitution of 1793. Singular absurdity and anarchy.

Committees of public and general safety.

Combinations in the South for overthrowing the frightful tyranny.

[o] See Segur's History of Frederick William, vol. iii.

CHAP. LII.

1793. Toulon puts itself under the protection of Lord Hood and the British fleet.

Toulon opened a negociation with Lord Hood, who commanded the British fleet in the Mediterranean. The English admiral, at the instance of the inhabitants, took possession of the town and shipping, in the name of Louis XVII. The Spaniards advanced into Languedoc, proffering assistance to all those Frenchmen who wished to resist the horrid tyranny of the jacobin faction.

Comprehensive and efficacious malignity of the governing junto.

In comprehensive tyranny, efficacious malignity, deliberative iniquity, affecting the persons, liberties, properties, and minds of their countrymen, the junto which now governed France surpassed all the wickedness ever recorded in history. Their predecessors had progressively promoted infidelity, confiscation, destruction of rank and order; but still there remained a considerable degree of religion, and great masses of property, with a small share of subordination. Robespierre and his band abolished Christianity; publicly and nationally abjured the Supreme Being. They proscribed genius, lest its efforts might overthrow their horrible system. They ruined commerce to stimulate the multitude to plunder; and they seized all property. Totally free from every principle of religion and virtue; without humanity, pity, or remorse, they proscribed, they murdered, they plundered; they deemed all mankind merely instruments for gratifying their diabolical passions.[p] The means by which they were enabled to exercise such a complication of tyranny was the multitude. By the populace conjunctly and aggregately they were able to exercise despotism over the populace themselves severally.[q] The war facilitated the extension of their power, because it enabled them to accuse all persons obnoxious to themselves as traitorous correspondents with foreign enemies. The

Robespierre and his band abolish Christianity and abjure the Supreme Being; attempt to level all civil, political, and moral distinctions.

[p] See Otridge's Annual Register, 1793.
[q] See Burke on Regicide peace.

war,

war, also, so much engaged the anxious attention of the people, that they had less time to brood over the internal sufferings of their country. Pressed on all sides by invaders, who they conceived were desirous of dictating to them in the arrangement of their own government, an ardent zeal to maintain national independence drew off their thoughts from internal despotism. The same patriotic spirit was inflamed, not only by the fears of foreign interference in their government, but by the belief that the dismemberment of their country was intended.

The pressure of the war facilitates their atrocities.

THE pressure of the confederates, and their supposed designs, cherished the ferocious tyranny of Robespierre. Detestable as this relentless tyrant was, yet, in one momentous object, he promoted the first wish of Frenchmen; not to be controuled by foreign invaders. In opposing the confederacy of princes, the revolutionary government displayed an energy that triumphed over all obstacles. Much of this energy, no doubt, is imputable to the very wickedness of the system. The understanding, employing its invention and foresight in seeking means for gratifying passions, without the least restraint from conscience, may certainly be more efficacious, than if repressed in its devices by religion and virtue. The extinction of every pious and moral sentiment, and the removal of the sanctions of a future state, prepared minds for every enormity. It paved the way for bearing down all opposition to the executive power, proceeding by massacre or any other crime that might most expeditiously effect its purposes. The revolutionary government, in its total violation of justice, found ample resources for military supply. *The terrible system* wanted money: a forced loan placed the fortunes of all men at its disposal. It wanted provisions, ammunition, arms: it put all physical

Forced loan.

CHAP. LII.

1793. Requisitions.

resources under REQUISITION.[r] It wanted men: its war minister, bold in conception as unrestrained by humanity and justice, said, "Let us confound all the calculations of experienced warriors: ours is a new case; raise the whole nation EN MASSE: overpower discipline by multitude; bear down tactical skill and experience; and tire out their efforts by fresh and incessant relays: consume your enemies by the fatigue of exertion." Scarcely were the orders given when twelve hundred thousand men[s] marched out to meet the enemy. Of these, great numbers, no doubt, were propelled by fear, and the assured alternative of massacre if they refused; but whatever might have been the motive, the effect was prodigious. To hasten the operation of such a multitude, vehicles were contrived for carrying both men and cannon with extraordinary dispatch against the enemy. Immense bodies were sent to quell the insurgents of La Vendée, and succeeded in repressing the attempts of these royalists. Marseilles yielded with little contest to the revolutionary arms. Lyons, instead of following the example of Marseilles, made a most resolute resistance, and for two months heroically withstood an active siege. General Kellerman, who commanded the army of the Alps, was ordered to besiege that city; but not answering to the impatience of the convention, he was removed, and General Doppet appointed to succeed him; to whom the inhabitants, who were not only unused to arms, but very ill provided with the means of defence, as well as the necessaries of life, on the 8th of October, were obliged to surrender. A great part of the city was reduced to ashes by a continual bombardment. The victors,

Bold scheme of the war-minister to raise the nation in mass.

Efficacy of this system. It overcomes the insurgents of La Vendée.

[r] See decree of August 15th, 1793, requiring all Frenchmen to be in permanent readiness for the service of the armies with every kind of warlike stores, and even every material for making arms, powder, ball, and all other kinds of ammunition or provision for military service.

[s] See New Annual Register, 1793.

who

CHAP. LII.

1795.

who had sustained considerable loss during the siege, were filled with furious resentment, and gratified their revenge by the most savage and atrocious cruelty. The wretched victims, too numerous for the individual operation of the guillotine, were driven in large bodies, with the most brutal and blasphemous ceremonies, into the Rhone; or hurried in crowds to the squares to be massacred by musketry and artillery.[t] Immense bodies of troops, under general Cartaux, proceeded to Toulon: an advanced corps having arrived in the neighbourhood of that city, captain Keith Elphinstone, of the navy, landing from the fleet, and joining a body of English and Spanish infantry, attacked and routed the enemy with considerable loss. Soon after, general O'Hara, arriving from Gibraltar, took the command of the British forces. Attacking the enemy, he defeated and put them to flight; but pursuing the fugitives very eagerly, he unexpectedly encountered a large force entirely fresh. In endeavouring to draw off his soldiers safely to Toulon he was unavoidably engaged in a conflict with superior numbers; and after an obstinate contest he was wounded and taken prisoner. Near a thousand of the British and their allies were either killed or captured. As an immense mass of French was now approaching, against which to defend the town the remaining handful was totally incompetent, it was judged expedient to evacuate the place with all possible dispatch. Accordingly, the allies made dispositions for withdrawing, and saving as many of the inhabitants as could be removed; and for destroying all the shipping, stores, and provisions, that could not be preserved by any other expedient from falling into the hands of the enemy. This service was performed very completely: the troops were carried off without the loss of a man; and several thousands of

Murderous cruelties.

The French force the English to evacuate Toulon.

[t] See Otridge's Annual Register for the year 1795, p. 275.

CHAP. LII.

1793.

the loyal inhabitants of Toulon were sheltered in the British ships. Sir Sidney Smith, to whose active intrepidity was entrusted the conflagration of the magazines, store-houses, and arsenals, with the ships in the harbour, most effectually performed this hazardous and extraordinary duty. On this occasion, fifteen ships of the line, with many frigates and smaller vessels, were destroyed, and an immense quantity of naval stores. Three ships of the line, and several frigates, accompanied the British fleet. By this destruction the French navy received a blow very difficult to be retrieved.

Netherlands.

WHILE the French, rising in a mass, crushed revolt, and expelled foreign enemies in the South, their gigantic efforts effected in the North a momentous change in the events of the campaign. After the reduction of Valenciennes, the French were compelled to abandon a very strong position which Custine occupied behind the Scheldt, denominated Cæsar's camp. A council of war was now held by the allies to consider the most effectual plans of pursuing their successes. Generals Cobourg and Clairfait proposed [u], while the French were under an alarm from the disasters in the Netherlands, to penetrate towards Paris, while a force should be sent, under cover of the British fleets, to co-operate with the loyalists in Britanny: the duke of York was of opinion that it would be much more advisable to extend their conquests upon the frontiers. He proposed that the army should divide; that he, at the head of his countrymen, the Dutch, and Hanoverians should attack the enemy on the side of West Flanders, while the allies continued their operations in the Eastern Netherlands. It was concerted that the allies should besiege Quesnoy, and that the duke of York, marching to the coast where he could receive maritime co-operation, should invest Dunkirk. This

Progress of the duke of York and the British troops.

[u] Annual Register, 1793.

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port has ever been, in time of war, a very great receptacle for privateers, and extremely troublesome to the English trade in its approach to the Downs. Therefore the British cabinet, as well as the commander-in-chief, were eager to wrest from the enemy such means of annoyance. Separating from the allies, his highness marched towards Dunkirk; and on the 18th of August he reached Menin.[x] The Dutch, under the hereditary prince of Orange, attacked a French post at Lincelles in that neighbourhood, and were repulsed; but the British troops, though very inferior in force, carried the post with fixed bayonets, and defeated the enemy. The French no longer venturing to obstruct his advances, on the 22d his highness arrived before Dunkirk. On the 24th he attacked the French out-posts, and compelled them to take refuge within the town.[y] In this engagement, however, he incurred some loss both of men and officers; and among the latter the Austrian general Dalton, so noted, as we have seen, during the revolt of the Netherlands from the emperor Joseph. On the 28th of August the siege was regularly commenced by the duke of York, while general Freytag, with an army of auxiliaries, was posted to cover the besiegers. A considerable naval armament from Great Britain, intended to co-operate with a military force, by some unaccountable delay did not arrive nearly so soon as was appointed and expected. His highness nevertheless carried on the siege with great vigour and skill. Meanwhile the republican troops, commanded by general Houchard, poured from all quarters, in an enormous mass. Attacking the army of Freytag the 7th of September, after several severe actions, in which the Germans made a most vigorous resistance, the French at last overpowered them by numbers, defeated them, and

Victory at Lincelles.

His highness invests Dunkirk with reasonable hopes of success.

Late arrival of the artillery and naval force.

Progress of the siege notwithstanding.

An immense mass of French arrives.

[x] Otridge's Annual Register, 1793, p. 272.

[y] Ibid. 273.

compelled

CHAP. LII.

1793.

compelled them to make a very precipitate retreat. In this rout Freytag himself, and prince Adolphus of England, youngest son of his Britannic majesty, were taken prisoners, but in a short time rescued. The duke of York, from the defeat of the covering army, found it necessary to raise the siege. Before he had departed, the garrison, informed of Houchard's success, made a sally, in which they were repulsed with great loss; while the besiegers also suffered considerably, and among other officers were deprived of the celebrated engineer colonel Moncrief, who was killed by a cannon ball. Houchard now attacked a second time all that remained of the covering army, gained a complete and decisive victory, and with his daily increasing mass, hastened against the duke of York. The British commander found it absolutely necessary to withdraw from Dunkirk, to prevent his gallant band from being totally overpowered by such an infinite multitude of enemies. The unavoidable hurry of his retreat compelled our prince to leave his heavy artillery, and a great quantity of ammunition, which fell into the hands of the enemy. The military chest was preserved by being hastily put on board a frigate.

The British prince is obliged to abandon the attempt.

THE miscarriage of this enterprize produced great censure among those who judge of plans by events; but at the time that the enterprise was concerted, there were reasonable hopes of success; and the attainment of the object would have been extremely advantageous to Britain. The delay of the gun-boats and artillery, must certainly have retarded the execution of the design; but the final disappointment was owing to causes, which no man, judging from military experience, could have possibly anticipated. The new French expedient of arming in mass had not yet been known to the allies, and the rapid means of bringing forward their immense multitudes were no less extraordinary

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and astonishing. The prodigious hordes thus carried to the scene of warfare must have discomfited the British project, however wise the undertaking, well concerted the plan, seasonable and efficient the preparations. Ends were to be sought, and means to be employed according to probabilities, founded in the experience that then existed. From so unprecedented a collection of armed multitudes, escape without very considerable loss was a great achievement; so great, indeed, that the enemy conceived it impracticable: they apprehended that if general Houchard had discharged his duty, he might have effectually cut off the British retreat. Under this impression the French general was afterwards denounced, and suffered by the sentence of the revolutionary tribunal.

The French mass compels the Austrians to retire behind the Sambre.

WHILE the duke of York was engaged before Dunkirk, the allies invested Cambray, Bouchain, and Quesnoy; the two former they found impracticable, the latter they executed. Prince Cobourg having repulsed a detachment sent to the relief of Quesnoy, the fortress surrendered to general Clairfait on the 11th of September. Soon after this capture the duke of York rejoined the confederates. The French army of the north, after raising the siege of Dunkirk, took a strong position in the neighbourhood of Maubeuge, where they were immediately blockaded by the whole united force of the allies, collected under the prince of Cobourg. The republican armies, after the accusation of Houchard, were entrusted to the command of Jourdain, who having formerly served in the French army in a humble rank, and afterwards became a shop-keeper in a petty village [z], but having resumed the military profession, was by the French government deemed worthy of the supreme command;

[z] See New Annual Register for 1793. It is there said he was a haberdasher.

and

CHAP. LII. 1793.

and as the allies experienced, did signal honour to the penetration of his employers. Jourdain, on the 15th and 16th of October, attacked prince Cobourg with such numbers, vigour, and effect, as to compel him to abandon his position, and repass the Sambre. The French general, now freed from blockade, was at liberty to employ offensive operations. Detachments were accordingly sent to make inroads into maritime Flanders. They took possession of Werwick and Menin, from whence they advanced to Furnes: they proceeded to Nieuport, which they besieged and greatly damaged; but the place was saved by having recourse to inundation. It was some time before the allied forces were able to stop the progress of the republicans; and their generals even trembled for the fate of Ostend. A considerable armament from England, however, being at that time preparing for the West Indies, under Sir Charles Grey, their destination was altered; and by arriving at this fortunate moment at Ostend, they saved the Low Countries for the present campaign.

They force the Prussians to retreat.

On the Rhine, after the capture of Mentz, a number of petty actions took place, in which the French were generally successful; but no event of importance ensued.[a] During the month of September, the duke of Brunswick gained several advantages, and the allies invested Landau, the siege of which occupied the remainder of the campaign. A French army commanded by general Landremont, strongly posted on the Lauter, covered and protected this important fortress. On the 14th of October general Wurmser forced the strong lines of the enemy; and Lautreburg surrendered at discretion, after being evacuated by the republicans. The town of Weissembourg made a longer resistance; part of it, however, was unfortunately burned,

[a] See New Annual Register for 1793, p. 192.

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and the French, before they retreated, set fire to their magazines within the walls, as well as those at Alstade. The French, not disheartened by these losses, made repeated attacks on the enemy's lines, and at last were so successful, that the duke of Brunswick deemed it expedient to raise the siege of Landau, and retire into winter-quarters. The armies of the Netherlands finished the campaign about the same time.

The campaign terminates much less favourably than its commencement promised.

ALTHOUGH the continental campaign of 1793 was on the whole successful on the side of the allies, yet its termination was by no means equally auspicious as its preceding periods. From its commencement to the month of August, it had been progressively successful: then, however, the career of victory was arrested. In point of actual possession, the allies had preserved Holland, and recovered the Netherlands; had retaken Mentz, captured Condé, Quesnoy, and Valenciennes. But it required little discernment to see that the prospect was not now favourable to the confederates, and that the tide of success was turned. The allies never appeared to have established that concert of ends, and consistency of means, without which alliances cannot hope to succeed against a single and well-compacted powerful opponent. If it was wise and expedient to seek the restoration of monarchy, their efforts should have been directed to that sole object. Separate aggrandizement, even were it in itself justifiable, necessarily created jealousy and distrust. The king of Prussia began to conceive that the successes of the campaign were advancing the power of Austria, while he had a share only in its expence and disasters.

Gigantic efforts of France, and want of concert among the allies.

FROM the dismemberment of France he could look for no accession, and was, besides, intent upon dismemberment in another quarter. Catharine having attained her wish of engaging the German powers in a war with France, had executed her

Catharine prosecutes her designs against Poland:

CHAP. LII.

1793. proposes a second partition of that territory, and invites the king of Prussia to participate.

her intentions, of destroying the new constitution of Poland, which had tended to extricate that country from its dependence on herself. She invaded Poland with an army of a hundred thousand men, forcibly annulled the constitution at the diet, and to secure the concurrence of the king of Prussia, as well as gratify her own ambition, she proposed a second partition of the Polish territories; that the king of Prussia should for his share receive the cities of Dantzick and Thorn, with Great Poland, while her own portion of the spoliation was nearly half the remainder more contiguous to Russia. The Prussian king was more occupied in securing his spoils in Poland, which a band of patriotic heroes still endangered, than in seconding the emperor. On the other hand, the emperor was extremely jealous of the acquisitions of his Prussian ally; and the bands of the confederacy were evidently loosening.

Frederic William intent on securing the spoils of Poland.

Rapid success of the British where they fought alone.

On her own element, Britain, unincumbered by allies, began the war with signal success. In the West Indies, the valuable island of Tobago was captured by a British squadron under admiral Laforey, about the beginning of April. From an early period of the French revolution, the West India islands belonging to France, and particularly St. Domingo, had been agitated and convulsed by the revolutionary spirit, and by premature and injudicious attempts to confer the rights of free citizens, in that part of the globe, upon the "people of colour," who constitute a large proportion of the inhabitants.[b] From the dreadful internal commotions, St. Domingo was a scene of devastation and bloodshed. In July, Fort Jeremie, and Cape Nicola Mole, being attacked by the British squadron, surrendered themselves. In the gulph of St. Lawrence, the

Conquests in the West and East Indies.

[b] See Belsham's History, vol. v. p. 101.

islands

islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon were captured. In the East Indies, the company's troops, in the first campaign of the war, reduced Pondicherry, and all the settlements of the French on the coasts of Malabar and Coromandel.

CHAP. LIII.

Projects of political reform. — Club of united Irishmen. — Institution and objects. — Convention bill. — Britain — great numbers are infected with the desire of change. — Causes — ignorance, vanity, and visionary enthusiasm, more than malignant intention. — Propensity in the lower orders to be spokesmen — arises from the free interchange of opinion which Britons enjoy — at this time is abused. — Dangerous tendency of certain political associations and sentiments. — Scotland. — Messrs. Muir and Palmer — trials of for sedition. — They are sentenced to transportation. — The punishment is represented as excessive, and even illegal. — Scotch convention for new-modelling the constitution — consists chiefly of persons of low condition — dispersed by the civil power. — Their leaders are tried and sentenced to transportation. — Meeting of parliament. — Mr. Fox and his supporters recommend peace — arguments against and for. — Mr. Pitt's reasoning on the war, and the internal system of France. — Lord Mornington's view of the subject. — A great majority approve of the continuance of the war. — Messrs. Fox and Sheridan impute to the combination the astonishing efforts of France. — Discussion of the question, With whom should we treat? — The opponents of the war predict the dissolution of the confederacy, and the triumph of the French. — Mr. Fox complains that the object of the war is indefinite — contrasted with former wars. — He prophesies that the war with France, like the war with America, would terminate in disappointment. — Various motions for peace — rejected. — Questions respecting the trials for sedition in Scotland. — Mr. Adam's proposed amendment of the Scottish criminal law — debate negatived. — Proposed enquiry into the conduct of the Scottish judges. — His speech on that subject. — Reply of the lord-advocate. — The motion of Mr. Adam is rejected. — Third proposition of Mr. Adam for assimilating the Scottish to the English criminal law. — Masterly speech of Mr. Adam on that subject. — Answer of Mr. Dundas. — Reply of Mr. Fox. — The proposition is negatived. — Progress of

the innovating spirit among the lower ranks. — Seditious lectures against the British constitution, and kingly government. — Proceedings of the democratic societies. — Plan of a national convention — discovered by ministers — leaders arrested, and papers seized. — Committees of both houses appointed to examine their papers — from the reports Mr. Pitt proposes a bill for detaining suspected persons without allowing them the benefit of the habeas corpus act — bill passed into a law. — Ministers, including lord Loughborough the chancellor, consider the crimes charged as high treason. — Lord Thurlow asserts, that by the law of England they are not treason. — Supplies, subsidies, and taxes. — Debate on the introduction of Hessian troops. — Apprehensions of an invasion. — Voluntary contributions for levying troops. — Session closes. — Internal proceedings in France. — Jacobin faction and Robespierre paramount. — Iniquitous trial, condemnation, and punishment of the queen. — Brissot and the other Girond prisoners put to death. — Orleans shares the same fate. — Danton overborne by Robespierre. — The Parisian mob adore Robespierre. — Real talents and character.

CHAP. LIII.

1793.

THE chief internal occurrences of this year regarded projects of political reform. In Ireland a society was established for promoting a complete emancipation of the Catholics, that is, a thorough exemption from all legal disabilities; and a *radical* reform of parliament, on the principles of universal suffrage and annual elections. This club, constructed on the model of the affiliated Jacobins, took the name of the *United Irishmen*, which was afterwards productive of such dangerous consequences. In the Irish parliament an act had been passed, granting relief to the Catholics, but by no means so extensive as their supporters in and out of parliament desired. They were allowed to exercise all civil and military offices under the crown, except in the very highest departments of the law and state; and they were prohibited from sitting in parliament. The executive government appeared well inclined to extend the relief, but the apprehensions

Project of political reform.

Club of united Irishmen.

Institution and objects.

CHAP. LIII. 1793.

sions of the Protestant party were so deeply rooted, as to render it inexpedient in the legislature to proceed any farther at that period. The united Irishmen, as a party, were not particularly connected with the Catholics, but consisted of the votaries of innovation[a] in general; held assemblies for concerting and preparing means to promote their schemes of change. These meetings being considered as dangerous in the present ferment, a law was passed by the Irish parliament for preventing such assemblies; being specifically described, both in nature and purpose, so as to restrain innovating cabals: the new act was known by the title of the convention bill. While the legislature endeavoured to prevent pernicious assemblies in Ireland, projects were formed in Britain by bodies of individuals for holding a convention, which should speak the national voice, and effect such changes as in the judgments of these politicians should appear necessary for the regeneration of Britain.

Convention bill.

Britain. Great numbers are infected with the desire of change.

THE revolutionary doctrines of France spreading into this island, produced a desire of change, which was different in object and extent according to the circumstances, knowledge, and character of their votaries. Men of desperate fortune or reputation might desire a subversion of government, in hopes of profiting by the general confusion, and no doubt there were such men in the clubs which were supposed to seek revolution. These were a kind of associates that revolutionary leaders might be sure to acquire, according to the believed probability of success. But, if their conduct be candidly reviewed, by far the greater number of the associated votaries of indefinite change will appear to have been misled by folly, ignorance, or visionary enthusiasm, rather than prompted by malignant intentions. A passion which produced the addition

Causes— ignorance, vanity, and visionary enthusiasm, more than malignant intentions.

[a] See Reports of Irish Committees in 1797 and 1798.

of

of many members to these clubs, was vanity. They wished to make a figure in spheres for which their education and condition rendered them totally unfit. The supposed exaltation of the people in France, inspired many well-disposed manufacturers, mechanics, tradesmen, and peasants, with a desire of reaching the same distinction, and stimulated them to exercise their talents as orators and lawgivers. There is, indeed, in the lower orders of our countrymen a peculiar propensity to oratory: the free constitution under which they live empowers them to utter their sentiments and opinions with open boldness; the love of social and convivial intercourse very naturally following an unrestrained interchange of thoughts and feelings, produces clubs, which at this period were very numerous. These requiring some kind of methodical arrangement, introduced some kind of order and system in addresses and replies beyond the desultory irregularity of conversation. Hence arose debate, which generated emulation to distinguish themselves in their circle of companions; the members respectively tried to be spokesmen. As their oratorial talents, in their own apprehension, increased, they wished for a wider field of exercise; this they found in vestries or other meetings of local arrangement; or sometimes betook themselves to debating societies, where they could exhibit their eloquence and wisdom on subjects of erudition, philosophy, and politics. From these causes there was, especially through the great towns, a pre-disposition in people of low rank, without education and literature, to recreate themselves with speeches and dissertations.[b] The visions of French equality held out to their fancies

CHAP. LIII. 1793.

Propensity in the lower orders to be spokesmen;

arises from the free interchange of opinion which Britons enjoy:

[b] At the trial of Hardy, the shoemaker, one Wills, a dancing master, who had accompanied the defendant to the Corresponding Society, being interrogated as to his own motives for resorting to that meeting, replied that he had a pleasure in hearing the conversation of *clever* men. See State Trials in 1794.

CHAP. LIII. 1793.

and passions pleasing images and powerful incentives; increased the objects of their eloquence and political exertions, proposed so wide fields for exercise, and promised such rewards as stimulated great numbers to seek change, less from dissatisfaction with the present than from sanguine expectations of the future; and rendered them desirous of reforming assemblies, not so much with a view to overthrow the established constitution, to crush king, lords, and commons, as to distinguish themselves in the proposed conventions. That some of the ringleaders desired the subversion of our existing establishments, admits very little doubt; but that a total misconception of the purposes of their leaders, vanity and the love of distinction, and not treasonable motives, actuated the chief portion of their votaries we may candidly and fairly presume.

at this time is abused.

Dangerous tendency of certain political associations and sentiments.

But, whatever might be the intention of the individuals respectively, the tendency of such assemblages collectively, in a season of revolutionary enthusiasm, was evidently dangerous; and required the unremitting vigilance of government, to restrain and correct delusion and to chastise mischievous deluders.

Scotland. Messrs. Muir and Palmer, trials of, for sedition.

In Scotland, two active agitators of political change, Messrs. Muir and Palmer, the former an advocate, the latter a dissenting clergyman, were tried for sedition, charged to have been committed in writing and other acts. The following facts were established against Mr. Muir at his trial: he had actively dispersed in and about Paisley and Glasgow, Paine's Rights of Man, and other books, and pamphlets of a similar tendency; in conversation expressed his wishes and hopes of change on the model of France; and purchased works hostile to the British constitution, especially Paine, for people too poor to buy them themselves, and so ignorant as to be easily impressed by his exhortations.

tions.[c] It was farther proved that he was an active and leading member in societies for promoting such doctrines and conduct as Thomas Paine inculcates, and that his rank and situation afforded great weight and influence to his exhortations. Mr. Palmer, an Unitarian preacher at Dundee, had been no less active in the east, than Mr. Muir in the west, and indeed much more violent. He had either composed or promoted addresses, which stimulated his votaries to enmity against the house of commons and the existing orders, and declared the highest privilege of man to be universal suffrage; inveighed against the constituted authorities, their counsels and measures, as oppressive and tyrannical; called on the people to join in resisting these oppressions, and adjured them by every thing that was dear to them, to combine for the preservation of their perishing liberty, and the recovery of their long lost rights. These, and other publications, similar in inflammatory rhapsody, were dispersed with ardent activity by Mr. Palmer, and by a very strenuous agent, George Mealmaker, weaver.[d] There could be no doubt that such conduct was seditious, and no valid objection could be made to the evidence. The jury were therefore bound to bring in a verdict *guilty* in each of these cases. In Scotland the sentence in cases of sedition rests with the judges; and in both of these cases the punishment was, that they should be transported for the space of fourteen years beyond the seas, to such place as his majesty, with the advice of his privy council, should think proper. Both these gentlemen possessed fair and unimpeached moral characters, and were deemed enthusiasts in what they conceived to be right, and not intentionally malignant incendiaries. Though

They are sentenced to transportation.

[c] Such as Thomas Wilson, barber; Ann Fisher, servant-maid; and others in equally humble stations. See Muir's Trial.

[d] See Trial of Palmer, at the Autumn Circuit at Perth, 1793.

CHAP. LIII. 1793.

this circumstance did not diminish the mischievous tendency of their conduct, yet lessening their moral guilt, it excited a considerable degree of compassion for their destiny. The punishment, indeed, was by very eminent members of the law of Scotland deemed and represented as an assumption of power by the court, which was not allowed by the statute enacting the penalties consequent on the species of sedition charged in the indictment. They were tried on an accusation of *leasing* [c] *making*, a term, which in the Scotch law means stirring up sedition, by spreading false reports between the king and his subjects. It was asserted by Mr. Henry Erskine and others, that the punishment annexed by the law of Scotland to this crime, was outlawry [f], and not transportation; that the judges might sentence the convicts to be exiled from Scotland, but that their judgment could not extend to their conveyance to any other place. Others, who were neither disposed nor competent to such legal disquisition, censured the judges for adopting the most rigourous mode that even by their own hypothesis could be chosen. Many, however, deemed the castigation wholesome in example, and beneficial in tendency.

The punishment is represented as excessive, and even illegal.

In the end of October 1793, a club of persons, entertaining similar extravagant ideas of reform as Messrs. Muir and Palmer, meeting at Edinburgh, denominated themselves *the Scotch Convention of Delegates* for obtaining annual parliaments and universal suffrage. This notable assembly consisted chiefly of tradesmen and mechanics, a few farmers, many of lower situation, and one or two men of

Scotch Convention for new modelling the constitution,

consists chiefly of persons of low condition.

[c] *Leasing*, a Scotch word, in its general import signifies a *lie*; in law it is applied to the particular species of falsehood described in the text.

[f] The punishments are three, fine, imprisonment, or banishment: the question respecting the last was, whether it meant merely the *exilium* of the civil law (outlawry), or the *deportatio* (transportation). There were very respectable authorities on both sides.

abilities

abilities and knowledge, who were unfortunately smitten with the revolutionary contagion. These persons having met, adopted the modes and phraseology of the French Convention, accosted each other by the term of *citizen*, divided themselves into *sections*, granted the honour of *sittings*, in humble imitation of their model; and proposed to concert measures with the innovating clubs, especially the London Corresponding Society, for the attainment of their object. It is remarkable, that those who sought universal equality of political privileges, claimed this equality as *an inherent right*, and upon this assumption founded all their theories. Now political power is the inherent right of no individual: every man has a natural right to govern himself, but has no natural right to govern others[g]: government is the creature of expediency. In every society those ought to govern who are most fit for promoting the general good. All men are not equally qualified for legislation, therefore it is not expedient that all men should have an equal suffrage, either in legislation, or in constituting a legislature: the political inequality which these visionary innovators sought to reduce, arose from unequal means of advancing the general welfare which these levellers professed to pursue. On this absurd theory of human rights, without any proof of expediency, these agitators proceeded; but before they had brought their deliberations to a conclusion, they were interrupted by the civil power[h], and dispersed. Skirving, Margarot, and Gerald, three of their most active members, were tried for sedition, and received sentence of transportation; which judgment incurred the same censure as the punishment that was appointed for

Dispersed by the civil power.

Their leaders are tried and sentenced to transportation.

[g] See this doctrine very ably explained by the learned and profound Fergusson's Principles of Moral and Political Science, vol. ii. p. 471., on the exercise of legislative power.

[h] On this occasion Mr. Elder, the Lord Provost, peculiarly distinguished himself by his activity, resolution, and prompt decision.

CHAP. LIII. 1793.

Muir and Palmer. The conduct of the judges who passed the sentence was very much blamed, not only by democrats, but by the constitutional opponents of government; and was not completely approved by many others who were well affected to ministers: but the merits of the judgments afterwards underwent a discussion in parliament.

1794. Meeting of parliament.

THE session opened on the 21st of January 1794; and the diversities of political opinion continued to resolve themselves into three classes, the same in principle as before, though somewhat varied in detail, from the course of events. A few, at the head of whom was Mr. Burke, deemed war against regicides indispensably necessary, until monarchy should be restored. A small, but greater number, reckoned the war unwise from the commencement, and a peace conducive to its professed purposes, to be at present attainable. The season of important victory, (according to Mr. Fox and others,) all wise politicians thought the best opportunity for concluding a peace. The continuance of war, instead of subjugating France, tended to drive her to desperate efforts.[1] We had seen in her recent exertions arming her people in mass, and hurrying them on to the scene of war with unheard of rapidity, the consequences of invading her territories. Continued attempts to trench upon her dominions, would only drive her to still more extraordinary efforts. Besides, to what purpose was the continuance of war? The professed objects of the British government had been attained in the delivery of Holland, and the expulsion of the French from the Netherlands. Unless we proposed to restore monarchy, which ministers said we did not, we were now fighting without an object. A very numerous body, at the head of which was Mr. Pitt,

Mr. Fox and his supporters recommend peace.

Arguments against and for.

Mr. Pitt's reasoning on the war

[1] See Parliamentary Debates, 21st January 1794.

maintained

CHAP. LIII.

1794. and the internal system of France.

maintained that the object of the war was and uniformly had been the same; the SECURITY of Britain, and general tranquillity.[k] The present terrible system of France was totally incompatible with these objects: in its dreadful nature it could not last. The people, if properly seconded and supported, would generally revolt against such an oppressive, rapacious, and desolating government. With the present rulers we could not make peace; but we might expect that their sway would be of short duration: the efforts of the terrible system had far exceeded any reasonable or probable expectation; but the resources from which they arose, so desperate and iniquitous, afforded in themselves the most certain symptoms and indications of the approaching decay of that fabric with which they were connected. The leading feature in the French revolutionary character, (said the minister,) is a spirit of military enterprize, exerted not for the purposes of systematic ambition, but every where in its progress spreading terror and desolation. We are called in the present age to witness the political and moral phenomenon of a mighty and civilized people[l], formed into an artificial horde of banditti, throwing off all the restraints which have influenced men in social life, displaying a savage valour directed by a sanguinary spirit, forming rapine and destruction into a system, and perverting into their detestable purposes all the talents and ingenuity which they derived from their advanced stage of civilization, all the refinements of art, and the discoveries of science. We behold them uniting the utmost savageness and ferocity of design with consummate contrivance and skill in execution, and seemingly engaged in no less than a conspiracy to exterminate from the face of the earth all honour, humanity, justice, and religion.

[k] See Parliamentary Debates, 21st January 1794.
[l] Mr. Pitt's speech, 21st January 1794. Ibid.

CHAP. LIII. 1794.

In this state can there be any question but to resist, where resistance alone can be effectual, till such time, as by the blessing of Providence upon our endeavours, we shall have secured the independence of this country, and the general interests of Europe. All the succeeding parties which had prevailed from the deposition of the king, however adverse to each other, had agreed in hostility to this country: the alternative of war and peace did not at present exist. Before we could relinquish the principles on which the war commenced, proof was necessary, either that the opinions which we had conceived of the views of France were erroneous, that the war was become desperate and impracticable, or that, from some improvement in the system and principles of the French, the justice and necessity which prompted us to commence the war, no longer co-operated. Lord Mornington spoke on the same side, and displayed very extensive information, and considerable ability. According to the representation of his lordship, the French views of aggrandizement were unlimited. Their desire of conquest sprang from principles which were subversive of all regular government. The avowals and exhortations of their most admired writers fully proved their schemes of boundless aggression, and their determined hostility to this country.[m] But a still surer proof was their conduct, which was uniformly and consistently hostile to this and every other nation within the reach of its influence. Our cause was originally just; the whole series of events confirmed its justice. But an important point to be considered was the probability of success: the recent efforts of the French arose from causes that could not long exist; these were the atrocious tyranny of

Lord Mornington's view of the subject.

[m] To support his argument, his lordship quoted many extracts from French writings, especially from a pamphlet by Mr. Brissot, which had recently reached England, and which breathed hostility to Britain.

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the present government, which embraced men, money, liberty, property, and life, within its grasp. The dreadful fire was consuming the fuel by which it was nourished: their expenditure was enormous; their finances must be speedily exhausted[n], and leave them no longer the means of so formidable hostilities: they would be compelled to succumb to the just and systematic exertions of the allies. But it was by our warlike efforts only that we could secure ourselves from the inroads of revolutionary France. In proportion as this system of tyranny consumed the property of France, it must endeavour to repair its disordered finances by foreign plunder. It must be the immediate interest of a government founded upon principles contrary to those of surrounding nations, to propagate the doctrines abroad by which it subsists at home, and to subvert every constitution which can form a disadvantageous contrast to its own absurdities. Nothing could secure us against the future violence of the French, but an effectual reduction of their power. That was a purpose which we had the most reasonable prospects of ultimately accomplishing, and the strongest inducements to persevere. But even were the French rulers, instead of being eagerly resolved to persevere in a war indispensably necessary to their usurped domination, disposed to accede to terms of equitable accommodation, where was the assurance of their stability? What reliance could we repose on the performance of their engagements? What was the purpose of attempting to negociate with a government utterly

[n] This was an argument often repeated by Mr. Pitt at different periods of the war. It was partly founded on the reports and calculations of sir Francis d'Ivernois, who very accurately and justly explained the sources of finance known to former experience; but, in his estimate, not sufficiently allowing for the enthusiastic spirit by which the French republicans were now actuated, did not consider its creative effects. Thence it was that all predictions of French bankruptcy, founded in the application of common rules to a case totally beyond their reach, were completely falsified.

unable

CHAP. LIII.

1794.

unable to fulfil its stipulations? Not only the characters, the dispositions, and the interests of those who exercised the powers of government of France, but the very nature of that system they had established, rendered a treaty of peace upon safe and honourable terms impracticable at present, and consequently required a vigorous and unremitting prosecution of the war. A very great majority in parliament, convinced that peace could not be preserved with the present rulers of France, and confident that their extraordinary efforts would speedily exhaust their own source, approved the continuance of the war, and its most vigorous prosecution.

A great majority approves of the continuance of the war.

The opponents of the war impute to the combination the astonishing efforts of France.

Mr. Fox and Mr. Sheridan persevered in maintaining the inexpediency of the war, the improbability of success, and the wisdom of peace. They denied that France had been hostile to this country. The chief charge of the present rulers against their predecessors was, that they involved their country in a war with Britain contrary to the interests and wishes of the people. But whencesoever the war had originated, the exertions and events afforded no reasonable ground for expectation that the objects, even if just, were attainable. The efforts of the French arose from the enthusiasm of conceived liberty and patriotism. So devoted (it was said) are the whole people of France to the cause which they have espoused, so determined are they to maintain the struggle in which they have engaged, so paramount and domineering is the enthusiastic spirit of liberty in their bosoms, so insignificant, comparatively, are all other considerations, and finally, so bitter and active is their animosity against the conspiring powers which surround them, that individual property has ceased to be regarded even by the possessor, but as subsidiary to the public cause; and the government which had demanded these unprecedented sacrifices,

Messrs. Fox and Sheridan predict the dissolution of the confederacy, and the triumph of the French.

fices, yet retains its power, and does not appear to have impaired its popularity. [o] France, by the pressure of the allies upon her frontier, had become a school of military wonder; and if other governments persisted in their design of thus goading her to almost præternatural exertions, we should see a military republic firmly established in the heart of Europe. [p] Such was the energetic spirit of the French, that we might be sure, with the resources that spirit would call into action, we could never succeed. In answering the ministerial objection, With whom could we treat? we might negociate with the existing rulers, and depend for adherence to pacific engagements, neither on the justice or stability of the present set, but on their interest, and the interests of their successors, whoever they might be, and of the whole French nation. Interest, and not good faith, had been our security in our various treaties with the despotic princes of France. The confederacy, in which we endeavoured to make an impression upon France, composed of heterogeneous materials pursuing different objects, Mr. Fox strongly and repeatedly predicted, must be soon dissolved. If the objects of the war had been just and wise, the plans were disjointed, inconsistent, and consequently ineffectual. But ministers, said Mr. Fox, never defined the object: they vaguely told us we were fighting for *security;* but wherein was that security to consist? In former wars our objects had been definite; to prevent the aggrandizement of France [q], by the accession of one of her princes to the throne of Spain [r]; to protect our merchantmen from the search of Spaniards [s]; to defend our colonies from the encroachments of France [t]; to resist the inter-

CHAP. LIII. 1794.

Discussion of the question, With whom shall we treat?

[o] See Mr. Sheridan's speech on the first day of the session, 1794. Parliamentary Debates.

[p] See marquis of Lansdown's speech, on his motion for peace.

[q] War 1689. [r] War 1702. [s] War 1739. [t] War 1756.

ference

CHAP. LIII. 1794.

ference of foreign nations, in disputes between us and our colonies.[u] There the objects, whether right or wrong, were definite: but here they were barren generalities, mere abstractions: if, as ministers professed, we were not warring for the restoration of the Bourbon princes to the throne of France. From their conduct, however, he was convinced they did propose that restoration which he predicted no foreign force would ever produce. He had spoken, and would always continue to speak, against a war which sought no object beneficial to Great Britain; required exertions that drained her resources, and anticipated the products of future industry. He prophesied that the war with France, like the war with America, would terminate in disappointment. We were incurring an enormous expense, in return for which we had no prospect of advantage or compensation. Such conduct might be varnished by splendid eloquence, or justified by sophistical logic, yet when viewed by common sense and common prudence, it was infatuated blindness that was producing consequences which the present and future ages would have strong reasons to lament and deplore. The minister merely played on the passions which he had himself inflamed, without addressing the reason or consulting the interest of his countrymen. These arguments were repeated both on direct motions for peace[x], and various other questions connected with the war, but produced no effect on the majorities in parliament.

Mr. Fox prophecies that the war with France, like the war with America, would terminate in disappointment.

Various motions for peace are ineffectual.

NEXT to peace and war, questions arising from internal discontent, projects of innovation, and the prosecutions which some abettors of these had undergone, occupied the chief share of parliamentary deliberation. Messrs. Muir and Palmer, and the

[u] War 1778.

[x] February 17th, by the marquis of Lansdown; May 30th, by the duke of Bedford and Mr. Fox, in their respective houses.

sentenced

sentenced members of the Scottish convention, in consequence of the power left by the judgment with his majesty and council to appoint the place of deportation, had been ordered to be sent to Botany Bay. In the execution of their sentence they had been sent on board transports at Woolwich, along with other convicts destined for the same place. Many who admitted the justness of the judgment, deprecated the severity of the treatment; but a stronger ground was taken in parliament: it was maintained, that the sentence was not legal, and that the criminal jurisprudence of Scotland required a revision, which should render it more definite and precise, and put it on the same footing with the penal law of England. Motions to these intents were brought forward by Mr. Adam, a counsellor of great eminence, deeply conversant both in Scottish and English law, with moral and political science, which could appreciate their separate and comparative merits. With this view, he proposed to bring forward two bills; the one of which should grant an appeal to the lords of parliament from the judgment of the courts of justiciary and circuit in Scotland, in matters of law: the other should assimilate the criminal law of England and Scotland, that crimes and misdemeanors affecting the state should be on the same footing in both countries; that a grand jury should be held in Scotland in the same cases as in England; and that the power of the lord-advocate should be the same as the power of the attorney-general. These objects Mr. Adam had in view before, and in the preceding session had announced his intention of proposing alterations which should assimilate the criminal law of the two countries. But the recent trials in Scotland, in his apprehension, had rendered the discussion of the subject more urgently necessary; and made it adviseable to change the intended form of the propositions, so as to include a declaratory and retrospective,

Questions respecting the trials for sedition in Scotland.

Mr. Adam's proposed amendment of the Scottish criminal law.

CHAP. LIII. 1794.

tive, as well as an enacting and prospective, operation. His first proposition was introduced to the house of commons on the 4th of February. Its purpose was, to establish an appeal from the court of justiciary to the lords, and to have a clause inserted which should subject the sentences of 1793 to the projected revisal. Having stated historically and juridically the facts and tendencies respecting the law as it now stood, and its administration; he observed, that there was not only a strong analogy between the criminal codes of England and of Scotland in the great purposes of all penal laws, but a striking resemblance also in their respective course of proceedings. Their mode of trial by jury was the same; every thing was the same except one circumstance; a right in the house of lords to revise the sentences of the court of justiciary and the circuit courts. With regard to the inconvenience that might accrue by bringing cases of criminal law from Scotland to a tribunal that did not understand the system of Scottish criminal law, this was an objection that applied much less to penal than civil cases, subjected by the union to the appeal which he now proposed. [y] Criminal laws had, in all countries, a considerable likeness, because there was in all countries an abhorrence of crimes; whereas civil laws greatly differed under different circumstances, objects, and pursuits of the several societies. Mr. Adam moved for leave to bring in a bill to give an appeal to the lords in parliament from judgments and sentences of the court of justiciary and circuit courts in Scotland, in matters of law, and that this be referred to a committee of the whole house. The motion was opposed on the following ground: it was a total change in the law, as it had existed both since and before the union. No appeal had ever lain from the justiciary

[y] Speech of Mr. Adam, introductory to his motion. Parliamentary Debates, 4th February 1794.

court

court either to the parliament of Scotland or the parliament of Great Britain; there was no reason for the proposed innovation, as no evil had been felt under the established mode. The greater number of the inhabitants of Scotland were perfectly satisfied with the administration of law as it now stood. They were persuaded of its excellence, and sensible of the blessings which they enjoyed under its protection. It was impolitic and hazardous to change a system experienced to be beneficial, for a system untried, and consequently of doubtful operation in that country, and not sought by the people for whose benefit it was intended. [z] After a great display of legal and political ability by the mover, his supporters [a], and his opponents [b], the motion was negatived by a majority of a hundred and twenty-six to thirty-one. Defeated on the question of appeal, Mr. Adam proposed an enquiry, which he had intended to have made a part of the same bill. He moved for a copy of the record of the trials of Messrs. Muir and Palmer, on the 24th of February; and on the 10th of March proposed the revision of the sentence passed upon these two gentlemen. He undertook to prove, first, that the crimes charged against Messrs. Muir and Palmer were what the law of Scotland calls *leasing making*, or public libel; that, by the law of Scotland, the punishment annexed to leasing making was fine, imprisonment, or banishment, but not transportation: that the acts proved against these gentlemen did not amount to leasing making, the crime charged in the indictment. If the mover made good these positions, the obvious inference was, that the Scottish judges had, in the late sentences, greatly exceeded their power; and if they did so,

Proposed enquiry into the conduct of the Scottish judges:

his speech on that subject.

[z] These arguments are to be found principally in the speech of Mr. Anstruther. See Parliamentary Debates, February 4th, 1794.

[a] Chiefly Messrs. Adair and Fox.

[b] Messrs. Anstruther, Watson, and the lord-advocate. See Parliamentary Debates.

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CHAP. LIII. 1794.

the illegality would be, in imposing such a punishment, extremely tyrannical. The mover supported his legal positions by very extensive knowledge, juridical and historical, reciprocally illustrating and enforcing each other; he endeavoured from statute, analogy, and precedent, explained by their civil and political reasons, to establish his doctrines; and attempted to prove that the acts, cases, and decisions which he quoted, were not detached or insulated, but all resulted from the same spirit and principles, operating most effectually at the best times, under the most admired authorities and purest administrations of justice. He also contended, that transportation to places beyond seas neither was nor could be a part of the Scottish law before the union, because there were no places beyond seas in the possession of Scotland; and no act had, since the union, been passed, allowing Scottish courts to transport in cases of sedition. On these grounds he denied the right of the Scottish judges to inflict such a punishment, if the crime had been established; and farther, asserted that the charge was not proved. Having thus endeavoured to show that criminal justice had been perverted, he forcibly and eloquently stated the evils, moral and political, which must arise from such perversion; and concluded with moving the production of the records.

Reply of the lord-advocate.

THE lord-advocate, chief law officer of the crown in Scotland, had officially acted as the leading public accuser against those persons; and now vindicated the judgments in question as legal and meritorious. He endeavoured to prove, that though banishment, by the English law, might not be the same with transportation, they were regarded as synonimous by the Scottish law: this (he said) was their acceptation uniformly in the opinion of criminal courts and lawyers; and he quoted cases to illustrate his doctrine. Such construction, he argued, was perfectly conformable to the practice

tice of the Scottish justiciary courts, and the Scottish privy council; and he particularly stated instances that had occurred in the reign of Charles II. to justify his exposition. After endeavouring to prove that such was the law, he vindicated its recent exercise. The persons in question had been extremely active in sedition, and deserved exemplary punishment. The chief speakers [c] on both sides took a very active share in this debate, which produced a display of legal and political ability that has been rarely exceeded in parliament: the motion was negatived by a great majority. Notwithstanding these repeated disappointments, the manly spirit of Mr. Adam proceeded in the course which he conceived to be right. On the 25th of March he introduced a third motion for regulating the justiciary courts of Scotland: the general object of his proposition was the assimilation of the Scottish to the English criminal law, in its substance, sanctions, rules, and forms of administration. The discussion of this subject necessarily introduced a repetition of certain arguments which had been already used; but also intermingled new matter. The mover endeavoured to prove, by accurate enumeration, the general incompetence of the Scottish criminal system to answer the purposes of substantial justice; he kept his present proposition distinct from the special subjects and enquiries which, at his motion, the house had lately been discussing; and considered the present as a general question, which derived its reasons and importance from the general system of Scottish penal law and its administration. Mr. Secretary Dundas denied the necessity or policy of a change in a system with which the peo-

The motion is negatived.

Third proposition of Mr. Adam.

Masterly speech of Mr. Adam on that subject.

Answer of Mr. Secretary Dundas.

[c] Messrs. Sheridan and Fox on the one hand, and Mr. Pitt on the other, exerted themselves in respectively supporting Messrs. Adam and Dundas. Mr. Dundas's exhibition on this subject was universally allowed to be able, and worthy of the high office which he filled. Mr. Adam's speech was, by all parties, deemed one of the first that had ever been delivered upon a subject of law within that house, and made a very great addition to a character fa t rising in eminence.

CHAP. LIII. 1794.

ple subject to it were thoroughly contented; instituted a comparison between the Scottish and English law, and endeavoured to prove, that in many cases the Scottish penal code was much superior. Respecting sedition, when he saw the attacks that were daily made on the very vitals of the constitution; when he observed this systematically done; when he found that works in their nature hostile to the government of the country, and addressed to the lower orders of society, were spread with indefatigable industry, he must avow his conviction that the punishment annexed to this crime by the law of England was not sufficiently severe to deter persons from this practice, and that the legislature must adopt a different mode of procedure upon that subject.[d] The lord-advocate, with more minute specification, defended the law of Scotland and its administration. The attorney-general, with his usual acuteness and moderation, defended the criminal justice of Scotland, as adapted to the general purposes of penal codes; the sentiments, character, pursuits, and habits of the people; and as firmly fixed by the articles of the union; but he delivered no opinion on the competency of the English penal code, as it then stood, to restrain sedition. The seemingly incidental observations of Mr. Dundas respecting the inadequacy of the English laws, did not escape the penetration of Mr. Fox. He appeared to consider it not merely as an illustrative remark on the subject before the house, but as an indirect intimation of an agitated change, and intended to sound the opinion and feelings of the commons: he warned him to beware how he meddled with the liberties of Englishmen, and to consider well before he increased punishment. This third motion of Mr. Adam experienced a similar fate with the two former; and was negatived

Reply of Mr. Fox.

The proposition is negatived.

[d] See Parliamentary Debates, March 25th, 1794.

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by a very great majority. Petitions from Messrs. Muir and Palmer were laid before the house, praying the reconsideration of the sentences; but the commons refused to interpose in a judgment which had been regularly pronounced by a competent court. Those important subjects which Mr. Adam submitted to the discussion of the house of commons, were also introduced before the lords by the Earl of Lauderdale. His lordship's motion was negatived without a division; and the lord chancellor proposed a resolution, declaring, "there was no ground for interfering in the established courts of criminal justice as administered under the constitution, and by which the rights, liberties, and properties of all ranks of subjects were protected." Thus finished the parliamentary consideration of subjects which warmly interested the public mind. Messrs. Muir, Palmer, and also the condemned members of the Scottish convention, were sent to Botany Bay. Many out of parliament, who usually coincided with administration, reckoned this punishment extremely severe. Though unable to follow Mr. Adam through the researches of legal disquisition, or the depths of legal science, yet, conceiving the convicts in question to be rather misled by enthusiasm than prompted by malignant intentions, they thought that the punishment far exceeded the moral guilt. Others, who deemed severe punishment necessary, argued, that whatever the intention might be, the tendency was so pernicious as to require the most rigorous chastisement which the law permitted, for the future prevention of so dangerous incendiaries; but this last reasoning proceeding on a supposition that the law did permit such sentences, could make no impression on those who denied the premises.

Progress of the innovating spirit among the lower ranks.

THE punishment of these agitators in Scotland did not deter innovating projectors in England from advancing with their schemes. During the preced-

CHAP. LIII. 1794.

ing year clubs had met, both in full assemblies and detached committees, to project plans and devise expedients for effecting the manifold and radical changes which the British constitution required to suit the ideas which these persons had formed of the perfection of political systems. Of the three societies which we have already recorded to have congratulated the French convention on the downfal of monarchy, the revolution club appears to have ceased its collective existence; most of its members being probably joined to the other fraternities. The other two, the constitutional and corresponding societies, very sedulously made certain results of their deliberations known to the world by advertisements, subscribed with the names, and *sanctioned by the authority* of Mr. Daniel Adams[c], under clerk, and Mr. Thomas Hardy, shoe-maker, respectively, secretaries to the constitutional and corresponding society. These were seconded by hand-bills and pamphlets, summoning the people to associate for the attainment of radical reform. In the course of their preparations they had called several meetings; especially one at Chalk Farm, near Hampstead. There several intemperate speeches were made; and when festivity intermingled with politics, very inflammatory toasts were proposed, and the meeting was undoubtedly seditious. Some of its most active members not only at that time, but in their habitual conduct, manifested themselves inimical to the British constitution, as far as their enmity could operate;

Proceedings of the democratical societies.

Meeting at Chalk Farm.

[c] This Mr. Daniel Adams I have seen before he betook himself to his legislative occupations. He then appeared to be a common-place, harmless, vain man, desirous of what, in colloquial language, is called *dashing*. His chief subject of conversation was the high company which he kept, and his own importance in the said company. I have no doubt that the man was actuated by the same love of distinction in his reforming projects, and that no inconsiderable motive to his undertaking the office of secretary was to read his own name at the bottom of the advertisements. Indeed, as I have already said, after considerable enquiry and reflection, I think no one passion produced more votaries of change than vanity. But whatever might be the spring that set such an engine in motion, the dangerous operation was the same when it was actually moved.

hostile

hostile to kingly government of all kinds, and desirous of establishing a jacobinical democracy. Among these one of the most noted was John Thelwal, destined to the same kind of perpetual remembrance which has followed John Ball, Wat Tyler, Jack Cade, and Kett the tanner, those celebrated votaries of radical reform in their days. This John Thelwal, besides his joint efforts with others of the corresponding societies, was singly and separately instrumental to the purposes of sedition by a kind of periodical declamations, which he styled *political lectures*. These lectures were chiefly comments on Tom Paine's works and similar performances, with abuse of the present constitution and government, more direct and pointed to its specific measures than even the efforts of Paine himself. With the most scurrilous invectives against establishments, which he called usurpation, his harangues mingled vehement exhortations[f] to revolution, or, as he phrased it, to resume the rights of nature.[g] Government observed the open proceedings of these societies and individuals, and suspected the secret machinations of the ringleaders: to discover the truth they adopted the policy which is necessary in apprehended plots[h]; and employed despicable instruments that are easily to be found in all great cities, as spies that were to attend the conventicles of sedition, and to become members of the societies, in order to betray the secrets with which they might be entrusted. In consequence

CHAP. LIII. 1794.

Lectures of John Thelwal against the British constitution and kingly government.

[f] See Thelwal's Tribune, passim.

[g] See Rights of Nature, in opposition to the usurpation of establishment, by the same, passim.

[h] The anti-ministerial writings of the times severely inveighed against government for employing wretches so very destitute of honour, and thence inferred to be so unworthy of belief. But the best and wisest statesman, in investigating secret and associated villany, must often make use of worthless instruments. As well might Cicero be blamed for employing the prostitute Fulvia in eliciting information respecting a conspiracy which he deemed dangerous to Rome, as ministers for employing such fellows as Goslin, Lynham, Taylor, and Groves, to elicit information concerning a conspiracy which they conceived dangerous to Britain.

CHAP. LIII.

1794. Leaders arrested, and their papers seized.

of discoveries which were obtained through these and other channels, ministers ordered Hardy and Adams to be arrested, and their papers to be seized; and immediately after, Thelwal, Loveit, a hair-dresser, Martin, an attorney, and two or three others, to be apprehended. In a few days the arrestations extended to men of higher rank and reputation: Mr. Joyce, a respectable clergyman, chaplain to Lord Stanhope; Mr. Kydd, a barrister of talents and fast rising character; the eminent and celebrated Mr. Horne Tooke, were among the numbers of the confined. The papers being examined, it was found that the two societies had concerted a project for assembling, by their joint influence, a national convention. This design, in combination with the many other proceedings of the societies, was construed by ministers to be a conspiracy against the constitution; and consequently (they inferred), a conspiracy against the king, amounting to high treason. His majesty sent messages to both houses, announcing the discoveries which had been made, and referring to their consideration the voluminous papers that had been seized. The ministers proposed a secret committee for the inspection of these documents. Mr. Fox reprobated the projected secresy as unconstitutional and unnecessary, tending to promote that system of misery and delusion with which he had often charged the measures of administration. Whatever (he said) the criminality is, drag it openly to light: besides, by a resolution of the house, the seizure of papers has been declared to be illegal, unless treason be charged in the warrant, which authorises such seizure. Ministers replied, that treason was charged in the warrant; that the seizure, therefore, was not illegal; that not only prudent policy directed, but the most imperious necessity dictated, secresy in their inquisitorial proceedings, as the very existence of parliament and

Plan of a national convention discovered by ministers.

CHAP. LIII.

1794. Committees of both houses appointed to examine the papers. Report of the committees. Mr. Pitt states his view of the substance.

and the constitution was at stake. On the 12th of March, at the instance of ministers, secret committees were nominated; and on the 16th the first report being read to the commons, Mr. Pitt stated at great length his view of its contents. He traced the history and proceedings of the societies for the last two years: they had adopted (he said) the monstrous doctrines of the Rights of Man, which seduced the weak and ignorant to overturn government, law, property, security, and whatever was valuable; which had destroyed whatever was valuable in France, and endangered the safety, if not the existence, of every nation in Europe. The object of all these societies was the practical inculcation of such doctrines. A correspondence prior to the enormities of France had subsisted between these societies and the French jacobin clubs. When the jacobin faction, which usurped the government, had commenced hostilities against Great Britain, these societies, as far as they could, had pursued the same conduct, expressed the same attachment to their cause, adopted their appellations, and formed the design of disseminating the same principles. Their operations were chiefly directed to manufacturing towns. They considered the convention at Edinburgh as the representatives of the people, asserted the innocence of those members who fell under the sentence of the law, and declared they could only look for reform in such a convention. But the chief attention of the house was required in considering a society, though composed of the meanest and most despicable of the people, who acted upon the worst jacobin principles, and had within it the means of the most unbounded extension and rapid increase. This society, comprehending thirty divisions in London, was connected by a systematic correspondence with other societies scattered through the manufacturing towns. It had arrived at such a pitch of audacity

CHAP. LIII. 1794.

as to declare its competence to watch over the progress of legislation; to investigate its principles; to prescribe limits for its actions, beyond which if it presumed to advance, an end was to be put to the existence of parliament itself. Recently this corresponding society had laid before the constitutional society a plan for assembling a convention for all England. The evident object of the proposed meeting, in Mr. Pitt's opinion, was to exercise legislative and judicial capacities, to overturn the established system of government, and wrest from the parliament the power which the constitution has lodged in their hands. This plan was to be speedily carried into execution, and a centrical spot [j] was chosen to facilitate the meeting of their delegates. An assembly had been held on the 14th of April, and resolutions were passed which arraigned every branch of the government; threatened the sovereign, insulted the house of peers, and accused the commons of insufficiency. Declarations were uttered, that if certain measures were pursued, whether with or without the consent of parliament, they should be rescinded; and that the constitution was utterly destroyed. [k] The proofs of these allegations were their own records; and it farther appeared from the report, that arms had been actually procured and distributed by the societies; and that, so far from breaking up this jacobin army, they had shewn themselves immoveably bent on their pursuit, and displayed preparations of defiance and resistance to government. From all these facts Mr. Pitt inferred there was a very dangerous conspiracy, which it became them, by seasonable interference, to prevent from being carried into execution. [l] In times of apprehended rebellion it had been usual to enact a temporary

[j] Sheffield.

[k] Report of the secret committee of the house of commons concerning the seditious societies.

[l] Parliamentary Debates, May 16th, 1794.

suspension

suspension of the habeas corpus law: that act had been suspended when the constitution and liberty of the country were most guarded and respected; and such a suspension was more particularly called for at this crisis, when attempts were made to disseminate principles dangerous to that constitution for the preservation of which the law had been made: Mr. Pitt, therefore, proposed a bill, "empowering his majesty to secure and detain all persons suspected of designs against his crown and government." Mr. Fox expressed his astonishment that the committee should solemnly call the attention of the house to facts so long notorious: the persons in question had for two years openly and publicly avowed the acts now asserted to amount to a treasonable plot. If this was a conspiracy, it was the most garrulous conspiracy that was ever recorded in history. Plots for overturning government had been published for two years in the daily newspapers; the real transactions reported by the committee were chiefly repetitions of stale advertisements. What was the real amount, taken apart from the comments of Mr. Pitt's eloquence? Societies had been constituted for the purposes of parliamentary reform; these had corresponded together; and they had corresponded with France when at peace with this country. To effect the purposes of parliamentary reform, a convention had been held in Edinburgh: all these facts were notorious and stale; a convention was proposed for the purposes of reform in England; and this was *the only new information*. The project was in itself contemptible and ridiculous, and could not really alarm the minister, or any man in his senses. The remainder was not statement of facts, but inferences either of the committee or minister; containing an imputation of intention to overturn government, without the slightest evidence that such intentions existed.

Mr. Pitt proposes a bill for detaining suspected persons without allowing them the benefit of the habeas corpus.

Mr. Fox's view of the alleged conspiracy.

No

CHAP. LIII. 1794.

No grounds were adduced that could possibly justify such a momentous intrenchment on the liberties of the subject as this bill proposed. The minister, Mr. Fox believed, was not really alarmed [m], but it was necessary for his views to keep up or create some new cause of panic, to gain a continuation of power over the people. [n] Why had not the law-officers of the crown prosecuted the authors of the writings or acts reported to the house, if they were so very mischievous? The bill underwent a very interesting discussion in both houses: its other supporters agreeing with Mr Pitt, contended that the facts brought to light evinced the existence of a most dangerous conspiracy, requiring the proposed suspension in order farther to discover its extent, and to prevent its wider diffusion. The other opposers agreed with Mr. Fox that no conspiracy or project of rebellion existed, and that the bill was an unnecessary and destructive infringement of British liberty; but the design of Mr. Pitt prevailed, and the proposition of ministers was passed into a law. By persons who admitted criminalty in the facts charged, different opinions were entertained concerning the degree of guilt which, if proved, they would constitute. The Lord Chancellor Loughborough, and several other eminent lawyers, conceived that the allegations, if established, would amount to a conspiracy against the king and government, and must be considered as intending or compassing the king's death. No less eminent lawyers, and at their head Lord Thurlow, declared, that though proved, they would not amount to high treason; that the interpretation by which they should be denominated high treason, was totally inconsistent with the letter of our statutes,

The bill is passed into a law.

Ministers, including the chancellor, deem the crimes charged to be high treason.

Lord Thurlow asserts, that by the law of England they are not treason.

[m] Parliamentary Debates, 16th May, 1794.

[n] This opinion was still more poignantly asserted by Mr. Sheridan.

which

which precisely and accurately defined that crime; and with the spirit of our laws, which rejected circuitous construction. These thought that the allegations amounted to sedition, and that the persons who should be proved actively guilty would well deserve the punishment annexed to sedition by the laws of England. Government having adopted the chancellor's opinion, and resolved to prosecute the persons arrested for high treason, sent them to the Tower, there to be confined until evidence should be prepared for their trials.

The accused are sent to the Tower.

THESE were the principal discussions and measures concerning subjects of internal tranquillity, whether retrospective or prospective, that engaged parliament during the present session. The other objects which chiefly occupied its deliberations were warlike preparations both for defence and attack: the investigation of belligerent measures and events, and schemes of finance.

Supplies.

AN expedition having been projected to re-animate and assist the insurgents of La Vendee, a body of Hessian troops was hired as part of the force destined for that service: they reached the coast of the Isle of Wight, and, to prevent sickness, were disembarked until preparations should be ready. No objection was made to the employment or destination of those troops; nor was the propriety or necessity of landing them called in question; but it was maintained in parliament, that whenever the introduction of foreign troops became necessary, ministers ought either to obtain the previous consent of parliament, or resort to a bill of indemnity. Without discussing the general question of prerogative, so as to form any precedent for future times, it was determined that the specific exigency justified the measure in the present case.

Debate on the introduction of Hessian troops.

AMONG the military supplies proposed for the service of the current year, was a corps of emigrant volunteers. Mr Pitt introduced a bill for

Bill for employment of emigrants.

that

CHAP. LIII. 1794.

that purpose, to enable the emigrant subjects of France to enlist in his majesty's service on the continent of Europe, and to receive native officers. Such a corps must be (it was said by its supporters) of wonderful efficacy, especially if sent to assist the royalists of La Vendee. The great body of the French was inimical to the terrible system, and wanted nothing but the prospect of steady and effectual aid to animate and invigorate them against the convention. The present usurpation of France was incompatible with the existence of other governments; and till we could overthrow their system of politics, we must not hope for peace or security. [o] In this endeavour he thought it right to unite with us persons who had the same reasons with ourselves, and who called upon the British nation to give them arms. As the present proposition, combined with the reasoning by which it was supported, appeared to approach nearer to interference in the internal affairs of France than ministers had before professed to intend, it was very warmly promoted by Mr. Burke, who seemed at last to conceive hopes that Britain would resolve, and explicitly avow its resolution of carrying on war *for the restoration of monarchy*. Mr. Dundas, indeed, had not stated the restitution of kingly government as synonymous with the overthrow of the existing usurpation. Mr. Burke, however, conceived that the terrible system did not spring from the individual character of Robespierre, but from the revolution which overturned the established orders, enabled and stimulated Robespierre's ambition to operate. The emigrant corps, he hoped, assisting the La Vendeans, if powerfully and comprehensively supported by this country, would pave the way for a counter-revolution. Messrs. Fox and Sheridan, with some others, op-

[o] See Mr. Dundas's speech on the bill for employing emigrants, when before the committee.

posed

posed the bill: they alleged that it tended to render the war more ferocious, which must always be the consequence of arming citizen against citizen; raised a force that was totally inefficacious, and that would certainly be overpowered; employed the votaries of the old government against the new government; and thus, contrary to the professions of ministers, really interfered in the internal affairs of France. They farther represented the measure as inconsistent with humanity towards the emigrants themselves. The French government had declared that no quarter should be given to Frenchmen caught in arms against the republic. In its immediate operation it must encourage the most cruel retaliation and ferocious vengeance; in its ultimate result, from the immense force of the present government, it would expose the emigrants to the most dreadful butchery. On these grounds they opposed the bill; but their objections were over-ruled: it passed through both houses with very great majorities, and was enacted into a law.

Apprehensions of an invasion.

In the course of the session a message from the king announced the avowed intentions of the enemy to invade this kingdom. A great augmentation of the militia, and an addition of volunteer fencible corps were accordingly voted: a letter from the secretary of state to the lord lieutenants of counties, solicited voluntary subscriptions to levy troops. The solicitation was represented, by members of opposition, as an attempt to raise money without consent of parliament. It was contended by ministers, that voluntary contributions of the subject for the purpose of assisting levies, when they received the sanction of parliament, were perfectly legal, and consonant to precedent and practice; and quoted the contributions and levies during the rebellion in 1745; in the beginning of the seven years' war; and in the American war, after the capture

Voluntary contributions for raising troops.

CHAP. LIII.

1794.

Supplies and taxes.

capture of Burgoyne. The supplies for the present year were very great and expensive: eighty-five thousand seamen, and a hundred and seventy-five thousand landsmen were voted. Besides the usual ways and means, there was a loan of eleven millions: new taxes on British and foreign spirits, bricks and tiles, slate, crown and plate glass, met with little opposition: duties on paper and on attornies were represented as oppressive, but on the whole it was allowed, that the imposts of Mr. Pitt, affecting the rich or middling classes, displayed financial ability and discrimination. Various subsidies were voted to foreign princes, and justified on the ground of contributing to the great purposes of the war. But the most important of these was the subsidy to the king of Prussia. On the 20th of April his majesty sent to the house of commons a copy of a treaty concluded by him with the States General and the king of Prussia, for the purpose of more effectually carrying on the war. By the stipulations with Frederick William, Britain had agreed to pay him 50,000*l.* a month; 100,000*l.* a month for forage; in all, for the remaining nine months of the present year, thirteen hundred and fifty thousand pounds: the whole year would amount to 1,800,000*l.*, out of which the States General were to pay 400,000*l.* Embarked (said Mr. Pitt) as we were in war so just and necessary, it was material for us to possess the aid of so powerful a force. The king of Prussia was certainly a principal in the war, but unable to carry it on without pecuniary assistance; and his force, for which we were engaged to pay, was to be employed for our advantage, and the conquests to be made in the name of the maritime states. The astonishing exertions of France rendered efforts on our part additionally necessary; and the object of the war being so important, it would be the most preposterous folly to

Subsidies to foreign powers—

to the king of Prussia.

slacken

slacken our exertions in order to spare expense.[p] Opposition reprobated this policy as the height of profusion, and contended, first, that from the efforts of the king of Prussia, no benefit could accrue to this country which would compensate the cost; secondly, that we had no security that when the money was contributed he would perform the engagements which he incurred. The king of Prussia had originally begun the war: this very beginning of his, whether through the French aggression or his own, had ultimately involved us in the contest. Now, the king of Prussia having engaged other powers in the quarrel, desired to withdraw himself, and must be bribed to persevere in a war, which, but for himself, would have never been begun.[q] His conduct contained such a mixture of perfidy, fraud, and meanness, as was unparalleled in all modern political history. No man of the least prudence could repose any confidence in one by whom he had been deceived; yet were the people of this country to pay to such a person one million three hundred and fifty thousand pounds, the return for which was to depend upon his own honour: let us not trust a prince whose good faith we had so much reason to doubt. But if the king of Prussia was to be considered merely as a hirer of troops, why were the soldiers which we paid to be commanded by himself? The direction of mercenaries should belong to the power which purchased their service. These arguments produced little effect: a great majority of the house conceiving the proposed subsidy to the king of Prussia to be conducive to the purposes of the war, the advantage and honour of this country, agreed to the motion which was proposed by ministers.

Bill to prevent sums vested in the Bri-

WHILE the British government adopted such measures as it thought most likely to strengthen our

[p] Parliamentary Debates, 29th April, 1794.
[q] Parliamentary Debates, 29th April, 1794.

means

CHAP. LIII.

1794. tish funds by French subjects, from being seized by the French rulers.

means of carrying on the war, it also endeavoured to impair the resources of the enemy. As the public funds of Britain afforded the most unquestionable security to the proprietors of money: there very large sums belonging to French subjects were vested. Agreeably to their general principles of converting private property to the use of the revolutionary government, the French rulers had turned their attention to this subject. They had formed a resolution, directing the use of every possible expedient to ascertain the property of French subjects in foreign funds, in order that it might be delivered up to the state and become public property; and that when the transfer was made, it should be paid for in assignats estimated at par. Mr. Pitt discerned the object of this scheme, and proposed means to prevent its operation. The purpose, he saw, was, to supply the resources for carrying on the war by plundering individuals of their property deposited in foreign countries, as they had before grasped the property in their own country. A general principle of our laws (he observed) was, that the payment of any debt owing to an alien enemy may be suspended during the war; and the king, if he thought fit, might attach it as belonging to an alien enemy: to continue, however, the benefits of mercantile intercourse, which were for the advantage of individuals, without trenching on public safety, the milder practice of modern times long suffered the rigour of this law to relax. In the present case Mr. Pitt proposed to secure the individuals by withholding their property from the grasp of the revolutionary rulers; and thus, whilst private advantage was promoted, resources sought by the enemy would be arrested. For this purpose he proposed a bill to prevent the application to the use of the present government of France, of all monies and effects in the hands of his majesty's subjects, the property of individuals of that country;

and

and for preserving such money and effects to the use of its owners. The bill, with very little opposition, passing into a law, answered the double purpose of securing their property to individuals, and detaining from the enemy means of carrying on the war.

CHAP. LIII. 1794.

Repeated motions made in both houses for the restoration of peace, necessarily reiterated the arguments which were before adduced; and indeed, the purposes of the propositions on that subject appear to have been chiefly to procure from ministers some declaration, or at least admission, of the specific objects for which the war was continued[r]; at least to induce them expressly to disavow every intention of co-operation with the continental powers to dictate her internal government to France: they farther aimed at persuading the houses to disapprove the conduct of the allies, especially of Prussia. Besides these indirect attempts, a direct effort was made to expose as impolitic the principle, system, and series of our foreign treaties. Mr. Whitbread, on the 6th of March, proposed an address to his majesty, expressing the concern of the commons that the king had entered into engagements totally incompatible with the avowed purposes of the present war; that he had made a common cause with powers, whose objects, though undefined, really appeared to be the restitution of monarchy; and earnestly praying his majesty, as far as was consistent with the national faith, to extricate himself from such engagements as might impede the conclusion of a separate peace. Next to the subsidiary treaty with the king of Prussia, a treaty with the king of Sardinia, by which we engaged to continue the war till Savoy was restored, incurred the strongest and most explicit censure. Britain had stipulated a subsidy of two hundred thousand

Treaty with the king of Sardinia.

[r] See Resolutions, moved by the Duke of Bedford and Mr. Fox, May 30th.

CHAP. LIII. 1794.

pounds a-year, to assist the king of Sardinia in his efforts to defend his own dominions. Mr. Whitbread and others maintained, that the advantage which Britain could derive from such exertions was by no means adequate to the expense to be incurred; and that *the integrity of the king of Sardinia's* dominions was not, in the smallest degree, NECESSARY TO THE SECURITY OF BRITAIN; for which, according to ministers, we were engaged in the contest. Ministers endeavoured to prove that the whole system and series of treaties, subsidiary as well as others, were means necessary to promote the grand ends of the war. The address was negatived by the usual very great majority; and a similar motion on the same subject experienced in the house of lords the same fate.

Proposition of an enquiry into the conduct and success of the last campaign.

HAVING in vain endeavoured to procure the termination of the war, and the dissolution of alliances deemed by government, and the majority in parliament, essentially conducive to its purposes, opposition proposed to enquire how far, in the late campaign, its objects had been attained, and what the probability of success was from perseverance in the contest. Major Maitland, after a detailed review of the measures and events of the last campaign, and an estimate of the result, contended that the attainments of the French had been greater than their losses. They had been forced to evacuate Belgium, but they had suppressed the revolt of La Vendee, a much more important event; since all their dangers arose from internal disturbance. The strength of the allies had been declining ever since the siege of Valenciennes. The empress of Russia made protestations, but took no active share in hostilities; and the king of Prussia was manifestly meditating a secession. The military plans latterly adopted by the allies deserved severe animadversion. While their armies were united, their efforts had been crowned with success: the separation of the forces

he

he imputed to the influence of the British cabinet, as Britain alone was to be benefited by the capture of Dunkirk. If the attempt upon that fortress by a detached force was expedient, the sole hope of success must arise from promptitude of execution, and the completeness of preparations; but neither of these attended the attack upon Dunkirk: four weeks elapsed from the taking of Valenciennes before the siege of Dunkirk was undertaken. Neither artillery nor gun-boats were ready in proper time for covering the operation. To the master-general of the ordnance, and to ministry, the failure of that enterprise must be attributed. The evacuation of Toulon was still more severely reprobated: why were not other troops sent to preserve the conquest of Toulon? or why, when it was found untenable, was not an evacuation at once determined upon, and the fleet brought away to save the unhappy inhabitants from the fury of those whom they had mortally offended? On these grounds major Maitland "moved a committee to enquire into the causes which led to the failure of the army under the duke of York at Dunkirk; and to enquire into the causes which led to the evacuation of Toulon under general Dundas and lord Hood." It was replied, that Dunkirk would have been to Britain a very important acquisition; that it had every probable appearance of practicability; that the attempt was therefore wise: that its failure arose from the enormous efforts of the French, which could not have been forseen or expected. From the same cause proceeded the evacuation of Toulon: those who censured us for leaving that place ought to recollect, that we had there given such an effectual blow to the French navy, that ages would elapse before they would be able to recover their losses as a maritime power. On a general review of the events of the campaign, great glory was due to the British councils and arms. These arguments appearing

CHAP. LIII.

1794.

pearing to the majority valid, the proposed motion was negatived. About the same time a proposition was offered to the house of commons respecting sinecure places and pensions. Since a war was deemed necessary that called for all our resources, it was prudent and expedient to retrench every unnecessary expense: for this reason Mr. Harrison proposed a bill to apply certain parts of salaries and pensions to the use of the public during the continuance of the war; and also to appropriate part of the emoluments of efficient places, so that they should not amount to more than a specific sum. This, motion was severely reprobated by Mr. Burke, as similar to the proceedings which had occasioned the ruin of France. It was the peculiar province of the crown to measure and distribute the portion of rewards according to the merits of its servants; and he was astonished the house should be called upon to interfere in a matter not within the scope of their ordinary functions. Mr. Sheridan attacked this doctrine as totally unconstitutional: did the crown possess the sole right of judging what rewards were to be bestowed upon the public servants? If it did, he would ask who was obliged to pay those rewards? The money belonged to the public: the commons were the servants of the people; and as the people contributed, they had a right to expect and demand that the contributions should be applied for their good. Entering into a detail upon this general principle, he gave a particular account of the emoluments enjoyed by certain individuals, which he appeared to think far surpassing their services; and that it was but fair they should contribute part of the surplus towards the public exigencies caused by a war which they warmly supported. The opposite party replied, that the pension list and sinecure places, during the administration of Mr. Pitt, had been very greatly reduced, besides that it would be extremely unjust

Proposition of a tax on places and pensions.

Arguments of Mr. Burke against the proposition.

to subject one body of men to an exclusive tax: On these grounds Mr. Harrison's motion was rejected. CHAP. LIII. 1794.

Mr. Dundas, as president of the board of controul, presented his annual statement of the finances of India; the result of which was, that notwithstanding the late war with Tippoo, and the stagnation of commerce at home until measures were adopted for the support of mercantile credit, the affairs of the company were in a prosperous situation, and he augured great and rapid increase of their prosperity.

The slave-trade was this session again resumed by Mr. Wilberforce; whose efforts, however, for the present were limited to one branch of that traffic. He proposed to abolish that part of the trade which supplied foreign territories with slaves. The supporters of the slave-trade rested their cause on the ground of its being necessary to the well-being of our West Indian possessions, which could not otherwise be supplied with labourers. They who were sincere in this objection to the abolition must warmly defend the present motion; for, instead of abridging that supply it tended to increase it, and to prevent us from raising the colonies of foreigners into a competition with our own. A bill for the purpose being introduced by Mr. Wilberforce, passed the commons, but was rejected by the peers.

The session closes.

These were the chief subjects which occupied the attention of the house during this very important session, which was closed by a speech from the throne on the 11th of July.

Internal proceedings of France.

Before the narrative proceeds to the campaign of 1794, it is necessary to take a short view of the internal affairs of France, which had a powerful influence on military transactions. We left the jacobin faction triumphant by the downfal of the Girondines; Robespierre paramount by his command over the populace; the system of terror completely

Jacobin faction and Robespierre paramount.

CHAP. LIII. 1794.

established, and producing the most direful effects within the country, but the most gigantic efforts against the enemies of its revolutionary system. The government of France was now become a government of blood, to be sustained by the terrors of the guillotine. This fell engine was employed to remove the obnoxious, to crush the suspected, and to destroy the unsuccessful. Misfortune, though totally blameless, was consummated on the scaffold: thence Custine, a general of great inability and enterprise, was recalled from the Northern army after the surrender of Valenciennes, and instantly committed to the prison of the Abbey. He was accused before the revolutionary tribunal of having maintained a traitorous correspondence with the Prussians while he commanded on the Rhine; and of having neglected various opportunities of throwing reinforcements into Valenciennes. No evidence was adduced to prove the allegations; but proof was not necessary to sanguinary despotism: he speedily suffered death.

Situation of the queen.

THE execution of Custine was soon followed by the trial of the unfortunate queen. This awful instance of the instability of human grandeur, after the murder of her ill-fated husband, had been separated from her family in the Temple. On the 1st of August 1793, she was suddenly, and in the most cruel and insulting manner, removed to the Conciergerie, a prison destined for the reception of the vilest malefactors. In the midst of a nation recently so distinguished for loyalty, every effort of invention was employed in the most wanton and barbarous insults to the consort of their lately adored sovereign. In a metropolis, within a few years the centre of refinement, and devoted attention to the sex, the most brutal and savage ingenuity was exerted in oppression, insolence, and tyranny, to a poor, helpless, and forlorn woman. The cell in which she was immured was only eight feet square;

square; her bed was an hard mattress of straw, and her food of the meanest kind; while she was never suffered to enjoy the privilege of being alone, two soldiers being appointed to watch her night and day, without the intermission of a moment.[s] Confined in this loathsome dungeon, in such circumstances of aggravated brutality, on the 15th of October, she was brought before the revolutionary tribunal. The charges adduced against her were, that she had contributed to the derangement of the national finances, by remitting, from time to time, considerable sums to her brother the emperor Joseph: since the revolution continued to hold a criminal correspondence with foreign powers: attempted a counter-revolution, particularly by applying to the officers at Versailles in October 1789; and at the same time, through the agency of certain monopolists, had created an artificial famine. According to her accusers she was the principal agent and promoter of the flight of the royal family in June 1791: induced the king to refuse his sanction to the decrees concerning the emigrants and refractory priests: in conjunction with a scandalous faction (the Girond), persuaded the king and the assembly to declare war against Austria, contrary to every principle of sound policy and the public welfare: war being commenced, she had conveyed intelligence to the enemy, and was the cause of the massacre of the 10th of August. To these allegations, some of which were totally indifferent, whether true or false, and the rest supported by no proof, one was added for a consummation to the rest, as physically incredible, as morally infamous: it was affirmed by these brutes, in conception as well as in conduct, that she had an incestuous commerce with her own son, a child of eight years old.[t] The queen considered accusation by blood-thirsty des-

CHAP. LIII. 1794.

Iniquitous trial and condemnation.

[s] See Otridge's Annual Register, 1793, p. 276.
[t] Otridge's Annual Register, 1793, p. 276.

pots

CHAP. LIII. 1794.

pots as synonimous with condemnation: though she disregarded such accusers, yet out of justice to herself, her origin, her family, and her fame, she exerted her abilities in rebutting charges so horrid and flagitious. With the dignity of an elevated mind, attacked by the scorn and iniquity of the unworthy, she answered serenely and calmly to all their asseverations. Retaining, in this dreadful situation, that full possession of faculties which magnanimity secures to unmerited suffering, she, though totally ignorant of the allegations that were to be made, demonstrated their futility, and confuted the assertions of her enemies. Respecting the charge of incest, she appealed to those who were themselves mothers for the possibility of the crime. Though her defence completely overturned the evidence for the prosecution, it was, as she well knew it would be, totally unavailing: she was pronounced guilty of all the charges, and doomed to die the following day.

THE queen heard with resignation a sentence which announced her speedy release from a situation of such accumulated misery. She had one consolation to which the diabolical malignity of her murderers could not reach: she was a CHRISTIAN: she believed in a future state; and therein she looked for happiness which no revolutionary tribunal could disturb, no atheistical assassins could destroy. Before she was reconducted to her dungeon, it was four in the morning; and twelve the ensuing day was the hour fixed for her decapitation. She was not allowed a clergyman of her own choice, but provided with a constitutional priest. At half past eleven the queen was brought out of prison, and, like the lowest malefactor, was conducted in a common cart to the place of execution. Her hair was entirely cut off from the back of her head, which was covered with a small white cap; she wore a white undress; her hands were tied behind her;

her; and she sat with her back to the horses. They who had seen her in the zenith of magnificence and splendour, could not but contrast her former with her present condition: those who had admired her exquisite beauty, could not but observe the premature depredations of sorrow on a face so fair: but if the changes impaired the gloss of her juvenile charms, they, together with their causes, to feeling spectators (and all Frenchmen were not brutes) rendered her faded countenance more interesting and impressive. She calmly conversed with her priest, exhibiting neither ostentatious indifference nor overwhelming anguish, but resigned submission. Casting her eyes to the Thuilleries, one scene of her former greatness, which called up so many tender associations and melancholy ideas, she indicated a sorrowful emotion; but repelling this last intrusion of worldly recollection, she turned to the instrument of death. At half past twelve the guillotine severed her head from her body; which the executioner exhibited, all streaming with blood, from the four corners of the scaffold, to an inveterate and insatiable multitude. The body of the murdered queen was immediately conveyed to a grave filled with quick-lime, in the church-yard called De la Madelaine, where the remains of Louis XVI. had been interred with the same privation of pious regard or decent ceremonial.

CHAP. LIII. 1794.

Execution.

THE murder of the queen was soon followed by the death of the accused deputies. The trial of these persons was deferred from time to time, till the complete overthrow of their adherents should give security to their prosecutors. They were charged with having conspired against the unity and indivisibility of the republic, by exciting a rebellion in the departments of the South, and in

Brissot and the other Girond prisoners are put to death.

[u] See Otridge's Annual Register 1793, p. 278.

Calvados.

CHAP. LIII. 1794.

Calvados. One article of the charges respecting foreign politics was, they were accused of having caused war to be declared, first against Austria, and afterwards against England and Holland. Thus arraigned, at the instance of the ruling party, they were all doomed to death: many others experienced a similar destiny, either undeservedly or illegally. The detestable and contemptible Orleans suffered the same fate which, at his instigation, had overwhelmed so many others. A decree had been passed under the present rulers for removing the Bourbon family to Marseilles; and Orleans, who had latterly assumed the silly and fantastical name of Philip Egalite, was included in its operation. From Marseilles he was brought to Paris, on a charge of having aspired at the sovereignty from the commencement of the revolution. As this was an accusation which would scarcely admit of any evidence but conjectural, it was not substantiated so far as to justify the sentence of death to which he was doomed. Orleans experienced in his own person the tyrannic cruelty of the revolutionary system which he had been so ardent to promote; and however deserving he might be of capital punishment, he, according to the most probable accounts, suffered *illegally*. Profligate and despicable as the character of this man had been, his sentence excited neither horror nor commiseration in any party: the last period of his life, however, appeared to indicate sentiments less disgraceful than those which had manifested themselves in the invariable tenour of his former conduct. On the 6th of November he was conveyed to the place of his execution, amidst the insults and reproaches of the populace; and met death with a magnanimity less befitting the associate and tool of Robespierre and Marat than the descendant of Henry. Two days after the ignominious catastrophe of Orleans, the lovely and accomplished Madame Roland was

Orleans shares the same fate.

brought

brought to the scaffold. To the distinguished talents, varied and extensive knowledge of this celebrated lady, her domestic virtues were not inferior. Her husband, hated by Robespierre on account of his attachment to the Girond party, was included in the proscription that followed the decree of the 3d of May: he accordingly quitted Paris, but his wife was apprehended and committed to prison. She was at length brought to trial, and the empty charge of a conspiracy was followed by a sentence of death. At the place of execution she maintained that firm undaunted spirit which had hitherto supported her; and, bowing down before the statue of liberty, she exclaimed, "O liberty, how many crimes are committed in thy name!"

1794.

Dreadful state of France under Robespierre.

To take away property, liberty, and life, to inflict anguish and torment; to produce to human beings physical evil, did not satiate the inventive malignity of this extraordinary tyranny. Robespierre and his band, more comprehensive and more thoroughly diabolical, ardently, studiously, and systematically sought the increase of moral depravation. Projects for disseminating misery could not, they well knew, be so completely successful as by establishing the domination of sin. Sin could never attain so extensive an empire as by the total subjugation of religion; therefore to annihilate piety, with all its external forms and assistances, was one great object of Robespierre's devices. To effect this purpose, one means was to destroy the reverence for all the institutions which are deduced from the Scriptures, and tend so powerfully to cherish sentiments of religion. Of these, none had been found more effectual than the exclusive devotion of one day in the week to the social worship of God; and the appointment of certain stated periods for specific commemorations. The calendar in all Christian countries, taking its first origin from

CHAP. LIII. 1794.

from the birth of our Saviour, and enumerating the years by an event the most momentous to the Christian world, had regulated the divisions of the year by epochs in the history of our Saviour's mission upon earth, or some other seasons connected with Scripture narratives; and had intermingled religious associations with the several progressions of the seasons. Of these, the observance of the Sabbath recurring most frequently is the most extensively beneficial. The government of Robespierre projected the abolition of these institutions, and actually effected a new calendar which destroyed all reference to Christian history and precepts, commenced the æra from the downfal of monarchy, annihilated all terms connected with Christian history and establishments, abolished the Sabbath; and instead of the seventh day, enjoined by the commandment of God to be kept holy, they appointed the tenth as a period of mere civil respite, to the total exclusion of all religious exercise. Having thus renounced Christianity, their new calendar partly adopted the phraseology and arrangement of pagans, denominated every space of four years an Olympiad, in imitation of the Greeks, and the extraordinary day of every fourth year an intercalary, in imitation of the Romans.[x] This innovation, therefore, under the government of Robespierre and his agents, tended strongly to promote that impiety which the tribunitian government was so eager to establish. Robespierre and his junto had often declared their disbelief of the Christian religion, and even denied the existence of a Supreme Being; but they had not yet produced a formal and public renunciation of the God and Saviour of the world. An act so horrible re-

[x] They divided the year into twelve months, consisting each of thirty days, and distinguished by names expressive of their usual produce, temperature, or appearance; while to complete the year, five supplementary days are added, and denominated *sans culotides*.

mained

mained for the legislature of a most enlightened nation, near the close of the eighteenth century. On the 7th of November, in the phrenzy of impiety, the republican bishop of Paris, and his grand vicars, entered the hall of the convention along with the constituted authorities, abjured the name of Christ, renounced the office of Christian priests, their appointments as Christian pastors, and their characters as Christian men. Now they would own no temple but the sanctuary of the law, no divinity but liberty, no object of worship but their country, no gospel but the constitution. This abjuration was received by the convention with the most rapturous applause. A number of allegorical deities, liberty, equality, indivisibility, and many others, were consecrated as objects of worship. To promote this system of paganism, agents were dispatched to all the departments, to complete the change. In many parts the abjuration of religion, through the efforts of the clergy, was very warmly received, while its various commentators added to the impiety, according to the measure of their invention. One of the most zealous votaries of impiety, was the republican bishop of Moulins. Trampling on the cross and the mitre, he assumed the pike and cap of liberty, and preached the doctrine big with horror to reflecting men, but full of encouragement to diabolic natures, "that death is an eternal sleep." A common prostitute was placed on the altar of the cathedral church of Paris, to receive adoration, as a substitute for Jesus Christ. The convention combined intolerance with atheism and blasphemy, and passed a decree, ordering the churches to be shut. Many of the priests who still attempted to officiate at their altars according to the rites of Christianity, were thrown into dungeons. Renunciation of religion, as its abettors foresaw, promoted the most enormous crimes. The populace, who in consequence of these

1794.

The revolutionary bishops abjure the name of Christ,

and a future state.

The churches are shut.

CHAP. LIII. 1794.

these proceedings reckoned themselves authorised to plunder every place of worship, public and private, divided with the convention large heaps of shrines, figures, and vessels, hitherto used in the offices of religion, while commissioners from the convention aided the sacrilegious pillage. The revolutionary phrenzy had not totally overwhelmed every principle and sentiment of natural and revealed religion. The decree for shutting up the churches was received with so general horror and detestation, that the government found it necessary immediately to reverse it, and again to admit religious worship. Robespierre, though most active in enmity to religion, yet eagerly desirous to preserve and increase his popularity, promoted the restoration of divine service. By the influence which he established among the populace, he was able to acquire an ascendancy over his associates.

Fall of Danton.

Of these, one of the ablest was Danton: this revolutionist, much superior to Robespierre in the talents and accomplishments which would have commanded attention in the Roman or British senate, did not equal him in the arts which conciliate an ignorant rabble. Conscious of his own powers, he intended Robespierre for a tool; and was active in overturning the Brissotines, in order to elevate himself; but at length fell, like many of his revolutionary predecessors, by the instruments of his exaltation. So contrary to the interest of an able man it is to aggrandise a rabble that would level all distinctions.

The Parisian populace adore Robespierre.

The Parisian populace loved and revered Robespierre, because in manners, appearance, and passions he was one of themselves.

His real talents and character.

His ruling affection was envy [y], a desire of reducing all others to the level of his own meanness. This sentiment, together with fear, the natural passion of a despot without high talents and greatness of mind,

[y] See Adolphus's Memoirs of Robespierre.

chiefly

chiefly prompted all the enormities of this monster. He both hated and feared [z] the aristocracy of genius, as a superiority over himself, and the means of effecting his downfal. But his tyranny, dreadful as it was to France, by its very terrors produced most gigantic efforts against its enemies.

CHAP. LIII. 1794.

[z] Domitian was the most timid of men; the fearlessness of Julius Cæsar, on the contrary, hastened his assassination.

CHAP. LIV.

Jealousy among the allies. — The Emperor tries to raise his subjects in mass — is opposed by the King of Prussia. — Plan of the campaign. — Respective force of the belligerent powers. — The Emperor joins the allied armies. — Energy of the revolutionary leaders in France. — Rebellion is quelled in La Vendee. — The confederates take the field. — Siege of Landreci. — Conflicts between the allies and the republicans. — Battle of the 24th of April, between the Duke of York and the republicans. — Our Prince and countrymen are victorious. — Landreci is taken. — Testimony of the convention to the heroism of the English. — Pichegru — his new plan of warfare — well suited to the state of his army. — System of incessant attack. — Co-operating line of French armies from the German Rhine to the sea. — The French wisely avoid a close engagement with the British. — Separation of the Confederates. — Jourdain advances with an army in mass. — The Prince of Cobourg attempts to oppose him without the assistance of the Duke of York — receives a signal defeat at Fleurus, which decides the fate of the campaign. — Pichegru in West Flanders attacks and defeats Clairfait. — Dangerous situation of the Duke of York — who retires to Antwerp. — Earl Moira is ordered to Flanders with his army. — The Prince of Wales offers to act under him as a volunteer — it is not deemed expedient to risk the person of the heir apparent. — His lordship lands at Ostend — finds the place surrounded by enemies — determines to force his way to the Duke of York — masterly execution and success of his design. — Advances of the French. — The Austrians entirely evacuate the Netherlands. — Intrepid stand of the British at Breda. — The Duke of York and the Prince of Orange are obliged to fall back — they retreat behind the Meuse. — Victories of the Republicans on the Rhine. — The German troops cross the Rhine. — Address of the Emperor to the German princes — is totally unavailing. — Faithlessness of the King of Prussia. — Opinions on the operations and events of this

this campaign. — Suspicions unfavourable to the Prince of Cobourg — are not supported by proof. — Cobourg a man of very moderate abilities. — Victories of the republicans over the gallant Clairfait. — The republicans reduce the whole left bank of the Rhine. — The British gain some advantages. — Winter campaign in Holland. — Sickness and mortality of the British troops; — intrepid efforts of the exhausted remains. — Immense superiority of numbers obliges our reduced army to evacuate Holland — which yields to the French arms. — Campaign of 1794 *peculiarly disastrous to the British army. — Strictures of military critics on the plan of operations. — Strictures of political critics on the executive councils of Britain. — Efforts of France beyond all evidence of experience or probable conjecture — the event therefore does not necessarily afford grounds of either military or political censure. — Signal successes of Britain when she fought alone — her fleets paramount in the Mediterranean — reduce Corsica, and protect Spain and Italy — in the West Indies she subdues Martinico, Guadaloupe, St. Lucie, and part of St. Domingo. — Operations of Earl Howe and the Channel fleet — skilful manœuvre to bring the enemy to battle — battle of the first of June — number, force, and courageous efforts of the enemy — unavailing against the British fleet — decisive, glorious, and momentous victory.*

CHAP. LIV.

1794.

THERE was a great and evident want of concert among the German powers engaged in the combination against France. The duke of Brunswick was disgusted with the conduct of general Wurmser in abandoning the lines of Wiessembourg without risking a battle, whence his serene highness had been compelled to raise the siege of Landau. He had written a letter to the king of Prussia, complaining of the want of concert, and extending his animadversions to the two campaigns. On the other hand the emperor, though he was far from blaming the duke of Brunswick individually, was by no means satisfied with the co-operation of the Prussian king. The truth appears to be that the jealousy which for half a century had subsisted between

Jealousy among the allies.

CHAP. LIV. 1794.

between the houses of Brandenburg and Austria, and which at the commencement of the war seemed absorbed in enmity to the French revolutionists, was still alive, and strongly operating.[a] The king of Prussia considered the continental efforts of the last campaign as aggrandizing Austria, without producing any benefit to him which could indemnify his own exertions, or balance the accession to his ancient and nearest rival. He did not regard the operations on the frontiers of France as necessary to the safety of the empire and security of his own dominions, and therefore conceived himself not fighting his own battles. If it was wise at all to combine against France, the expediency of such a confederacy must have arisen from some common object, which it imported the several members of the alliance to pursue; and if it was to be pursued, vigorous measures with concert of operations only could be efficient. If the king of Prussia apprehended imminent danger from the progress of French principles, or of French power, in sound policy he ought to have made the repression of these his supreme object; and to have restrained for the present his jealousy of the house of Austria. If he did not apprehend danger from France, prudence required he should withdraw from the confederacy; honour and sincerity demanded that he should not pretend to be an ostensive member of the alliance, if he was resolved to be inactive in its service, and indifferent about its success. On the other hand, the same unity of object was the real interest of the emperor, if it was his interest at all to be member of a combination against France. The separate appropriation of fortresses could not indemnify him for his belligerent exertions, must disgust his continental ally, and ultimately contravene the advancement of their common object. In

The emperor tries to raise his subjects in mass;

[a] Segur, vol. iii. chap. 13.

the

CHAP. LIV.

1794.

the beginning of this year the emperor, extremely anxious to oppose fresh numbers of Germans to the republican host, actively endeavoured to induce the Germanic states to arm in mass. This mode the king of Prussia declared he would never sanction, and would withdraw his troops if it were attempted. He however professed himself still an active member of the confederacy, and ready to support every prudent and practicable project for forwarding its ends. The emperor found it necessary to acquiesce in Frederic William's objection to a levy in mass, and to appear satisfied with his professions of zeal in the cause. The subsidiary treaty with England either empowered him to make vigorous efforts or induced him to promise such, and accordingly he was still deemed one of the chief members of the confederacy, and upon the conviction of his co-operation the projects and plans of the campaign were formed. The confederates proposed this year to press upon the frontiers of France with numerous forces on various sides, and also to co-operate with the insurgents on the coast of Brittany. In the month of February the duke of York, and with him colonel Mack, came over from the continent to London to hold a conference with the British ministers on the operations of the campaign. The emperor undertook to furnish two hundred thousand men, the king of Prussia sixty-four, including thirty-two thousand in British pay, Britain forty thousand, the rest of the allies, the Dutch, German princes, and the emigrants, fifty-two thousand; so that the whole combined force to operate on the frontiers of France should amount to three hundred and fifty-six thousand men, besides the troops intended to be employed by Britain on the coast. The French army, it appears, at this time amounted to seven hundred and eighty thousand men, of whom four hundred and eighty thousand composed the armies on the frontiers, and the rest were em-

is opposed by the king of Prussia.

Plan of the campaign.

Respective forces of the belligerent powers.

CHAP. LIV.

ployed either in watching the late scenes of insurrection, or on the frontiers of Spain and the Alps.

1794.

On the fifth of March the duke of York arrived on the continent, to take the command of the British army; on the seventeenth he proceeded with general Clairfait to Valenciennes, where a council of war was held with the prince of Saxe Cobourg, after which the generals returned to their respective head-quarters. It was determined that the emperor himself should take the field, and should be invested with the supreme command.

The emperor joins the allied armies.

On the ninth of April his imperial majesty arrived at Brussels, and was inaugurated duke of Brabant. This ceremony, performed with great pomp and splendour, it was presumed would strike the imaginations and hearts of the people, and stimulate them to the most vigorous efforts in his and their own cause. The States in a body presented his imperial majesty with the keys of the Louvain: on the gate there was the following inscription: "*Cæsar adest, trement Galli:*" this sentence was by the courtiers construed to mean the French republicans tremble at the approach of the emperor Francis. Great numbers of children, decorated with white staves, drew the state coach solemnly along; at the principal church *Te Deum* was chaunted; verses were presented to the emperor, congratulating his inauguration, and celebrating the achievements which he was to perform. His imperial majesty, proceeding to Valenciennes, was joyfully received by the allied army; and on the 16th of April he reviewed the combined forces, previously to the commencement of military operations.

Energy of the revolutionary leaders in France.

Meanwhile the French government had made the most powerful and efficient dispositions for opening the campaign. Horrible as the decemviral system was, it possessed one quality so momentous in war, that without it all other qualities

supported by the most abundant resources are of little efficacy; it was distinguished for extraordinary ENERGY. Every latent power was called into action; its immense resources were not only employed, but converged into a focus. The immediate object was to repel foreign invasions and interference wheresoever they threatened, and wheresoever they were seconded; to concentrate all the intellectual and physical force of France to this point; to crumble all opposition to this design and to the existing rulers who were carrying it into execution. Some embers of rebellion rekindling early in spring, troops were sent with the usual rapidity to the scene of reviving insurrection. These speedily subjugated the royalists, and punished them in the most summary and cruel manner. Rebellion was crushed by the dispersion of the Vendeans; faction was extinguished; and hostile operations against foreign powers engrossed the sole attention. General Jourdain was removed from the command of the northern army, and succeeded by general Pichegru, whose uncommon military talents proved him deserving of this confidence. As Jourdain was permitted to retire without disgrace, and indeed, in the express words of the decree, with honour to himself and with the gratitude of his country, his retirement was but short, and he was afterwards appointed to command the army of the Rhine.

Rebellion is quelled in La Vendee.

ON the 17th of April the confederates advanced in eight columns to invest Landreci, a well fortified town in Hainault, on the right bank of the river Sambre. The first column, composed of Austrian and Dutch troops under prince Christian of Hesse Darmstadt, advanced upon the village of Catillon, which was forced after some resistance. The second under lieutenant-general Alvintzy, forced the French entrenchments at Mazinguer, Oisy, and Nouvion, and took possession of the

The confederates take the field. Siege of Landreci.

CHAP. LIV. 1794.

whole forest of Nouviou. The third column, led on by the emperor in person and the prince of Cobourg, after carrying the villages of Ribouville and Wassigny, detached forwards the advanced guards, which took possession of the heights called Grand and Petit Blocus. The fourth and fifth columns were entrusted to the duke of York: the first of these was under his own immediate direction; and the latter was commanded by sir William Erskine. The objects of these columns were the redoubts and village of Vaux, and the strong entrenchments of the French in the wood called Bois de Bouchain. The sixth, seventh, and eighth columns, under the hereditary prince of Orange, were not engaged, being only a corps of observation on the side of Cambray.[b] The duke of York endeavoured, notwithstanding the strong position of the French army, to turn their right, and for that purpose ordered the whole column to move forwards under the cover of the high ground, leaving only sufficient cavalry to occupy their attention. The fire of the republicans was at first severe, but finding the British troops eager to press them to a close engagement, which they foresaw would terminate in their discomfiture, they thought it expedient to retreat. These successes of the British troops enabled the confederates to commence the siege. The French assembled in considerable force at the camp of Cæsar, near Cambray, which, as we have seen, they had occupied the former year. The duke of York, well knowing the efficacy of the British force, on the 23d of April sent general Otto to attack the enemy's position. Otto, finding the French strong, and firmly posted, delayed the assault till the arrival of a reinforcement, when, charging them with impetuosity, he soon broke their line, and, after killing twelve hundred, drove

Conflicts between the allies and the republicans.

[b] See new Annual Register for 1794, p. 328.

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CHAP. LIV.

1794.

the rest into Cambray, with the loss of their artillery.[c] Pichegru, not disheartened by these repeated disadvantages, still directed his own movements against the most formidable part of his enemies. On the 24th of April he attacked the duke of York on all sides. The consummate general of the republicans found in the British prince and his army a commander and soldiers not to be overcome even by his ability and efforts. Frederic vigorously receiving the assailants in front by grape shot and musketry, judiciously dispatched several regiments of cavalry round the right, and of infantry round the left wing of his enemy, while he himself opposed the powerful and numerous host in the front of the battle; the two detachments charging the enemy's flanks, broke their lines, and produced a most destructive carnage in both wings: such a combination of valour and skill completely defeated the French. This attempt of Pichegru was only part of a general plan of attack, extending from Treves to the sea, although he chose for himself the post of most difficulty and danger. On the right, the columns of the French attacking the enemy's army were repulsed with loss, though not nearly so great as the loss which they incurred in their conflict with the duke of York. On the left, they gained a trifling advantage by the reduction of Menin and Courtray. Other engagements took place during the siege, without any decisive event. Where the British fought the French were uniformly repulsed; but in their other conflicts they were more successful. Their efforts, however, to relieve Landreci, were not effectual, as that fortress was captured after an investment of ten days. The French rulers acknowledged in the convention, that though not the most numerous,

Battle of the 24th of April between the duke of York and the republicans:

our prince and countrymen are victorious.

Landreci is taken. Testimony of the convention to the heroism of the English

[c] See Macfarlane's History, vol. iv. p. 469.

CHAP. LIV.

the most formidable opponents to Gallic valour were the English.[d]

1794. Pichegru.

His new plan of warfare.

PICHEGRU, a man of strong and comprehensive genius, regarded precedented modes of warfare no farther than they could serve his purpose, and formed a plan of attack at once new and admirably adapted to the character of the French, especially to the soldiers under his command. His system of tactics consisted in pursuing the enemy without intermission; courting opportunities of engagements; and keeping his whole force together, without dividing it for the purpose of carrying on sieges; to reduce only such as were necessary in order to secure proper positions, without seeming to be at all concerned about the reduction of such strong places as he had left behind. This system was suitable to the state of military experience among the greater part of the French soldiers, as well as to the character of the people. The troops were mostly new levied, and although nationally courageous, active, and impetuous, and then inspirited by enthusiasm, yet they were not sufficiently trained in stationary warfare to undertake any siege of difficulty. Besides, as an annalist[e] of the present campaign observes, "the French soldier is too ardent and impatient to go through with a chain of operations that require perseverance. In the field he darts forth as an eagle, and fights like a lion. But a long and arduous siege repels, and often even discourages. In order to have a military body of men perfect and invincible, it would be necessary to carry on sieges with Swiss troops, and to have French armies of observation. But while a general has only Frenchmen under his command, he ought not to let them grow restive, by remain-

[d] See Barrere's speech in the convention, after the late victory of the duke of York.

[e] Histoire Chronologique des Operations de l'Armée du Nord, et de celle du Sambre et Meuse, par le Citoyen David, temoin des plupart de leurs exploits.

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ing long in one place, but keep them always in breath, and always within view of the enemy." This system of incessant attack was extended in its operation to the several armies of the republicans, so as to render them really parts of one great host, closely connected together, as one army over a wide expanse of country. From the German Rhine to the sea, there was one co-operating line of armies. Though the victory of the duke of York, and the capture of Landreci retarded the progress of this grand scheme of advance and assault they did not prevent its final execution and success. The exertions and attainments of the British arms eventually promoted the accomplishment of the French projects. After the battle of the 24th of April, they cautiously abstained from close engagement with the British forces, and bent their principal efforts, both on the right and left, against the Austrians.

1794. System of incessant attack.

Co-operating line of French armies from the German Rhine to the sea.

The French wisely avoid a close engagement wth the British.

To this plan of partial attack the movements of the allied army were peculiarly auspicious. Soon after the siege of Landreci it was judged expedient to divide the confederates into three parts; the chief army under the immediate command of the prince of Cobourg, and having the emperor himself at its head, was posted near the Sambre; the duke of York with the British forces, was stationed at Tournay; and general Clairfait, with a third army, occupied West Flanders. Pichegru directed his own principal efforts to the left against Clairfait, and straitening the quarters of the duke of York; and in attacking British posts and detachments, without hazarding a decisive battle. Several very bloody conflicts, however, took place in this kind of warfare, but without materially impairing his highness's force, though fresh numbers were daily joining the French army. Jourdain with the army of the Rhine, in the beginning of the campaign, had met with severe checks, but had been ultimately successful against general Beaulieu, whom he compelled

Separation of the confederates.

Jourdain advances with an army in mass.

CHAP. LIV.

compelled to evacuate the duchy of Luxemburg, and to fall back to Namur. Encouraged by their career of success, the French now prepared to invest Charleroi on the Sambre. The prince of Cobourg with the main army advanced to its relief; but though the undertaking was extremely important, trusted to his own troops, without calling for the aid of the duke of York from Tournay. On the 21st of June he reached Ath, and on the 24th he effected a junction with the prince of Orange and general Beaulieu, at Nivelles. The main body of the French army, under general Jourdain, was posted at this time at Templeuve, Gosselies, and Fleurus, for the purpose of covering the siege of Charleroi. A battle ensued: both armies fought with the most intrepid courage, but the impetuous valour of the French succeeded. The allied army was defeated in every quarter, and forced with immense loss to retreat to Halle, thirty miles from the field of battle[f]: this victory decided the fate of the campaign. Charleroi, and soon after Brussels, fell into the hands of the victorious enemy. In West Flanders Pichegru was equally successful against Clairfait. Receiving large reinforcements from Lisle, he undertook the siege of Ypres, the key of Flanders. The importance of this place induced general Clairfait to hazard the whole corps under his command for its relief. On the 13th of June he attacked the republicans; and drove them from their first position; but fortune soon changed. The ability, courage, and skill of Clairfait were in vain opposed to the immense host of impetuous republicans. After a series of defeats he was compelled to abandon Ypres, to retire to Ghent, while Pichegru over-ran West Flanders. The geographical reader, by tracing the progress of the French army, and the retreat of the Austrians, and observ-

1794.

Battle of Fleurus.

June 26.

Pichegru in West Flanders attacks and defeats Clairfait.

Dangerous situation of the duke of York,

[f] New Annual Register, 1794, p. 533.

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ing the position of the duke of York, will see that he was in a very dangerous situation, surrounded on all sides by the conquering multitudes of the French troops. Ever since the enemy, by the defeat of Cobourg, were so much advanced on his left, the duke's position had been very perilous; but since the progress of Pichegru upon his right, his post was no longer tenable; he accordingly retired with great expedition to Antwerp. The emperor despairing of success, after in vain endeavouring to raise the people of the Netherlands in mass, returned to Vienna.

who retires to Antwerp.

PART of the original plan of the campaign had been, as we have already seen, to co-operate with the insurgents of La Vendée. Britain had undertaken, with that view, to send an expedition to France, and proposed to entrust the command to the valour, ability, and conduct of earl Moira[s], who, as lord Rawdon, had attained so high military distinction in America. But the supression of the insurgents, already recorded, prevented this design from being carried into execution. His lordship's army was therefore ordered to Flanders. One illustrious personage, seeking a wider field for the exercise of his vigorous genius and active mind, and wishing to learn the military art from so able a master, desired to serve as a volunteer: this was George prince of Wales. Fitted by natural abilities and acquirements for either the cabinet or the field, the heir apparent, from the delicacy of his situation, had cautiously abstained from political business. His present proposition did not, he conceived, interfere with the line of conduct which filial duty had chalked to itself. But his royal parents, not deeming it expedient to risk the person of the heir apparent, the execution of his intention was not permitted. In the latter end of June earl Moira, with ten thousand

Earl Moira is ordered with his army to Flanders.

The prince of Wales offers to act under him as a volunteer.

It is not deemed expedient

[s] His lordship had succeeded to that title in the former year by the death of his father.

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CHAP. LIV.

men, landed at Ostend, just as the Austrians had been obliged to evacuate West Flanders. The French, in the mean time, were advancing upon Ghent in great force, and but little expectation was entertained of general Clairfait's being able to make any effectual resistance in that quarter. In the situation in which the earl of Moira found the affairs of the allies, an alternative occurred, of either defending Ostend, or proceeding to join the duke of York. To succour the confederates, and support the British army, appeared an object of more urgent importance than the precarious possession of a single town; whatever movement was to be made required dispatch, lest the advance of the French armies might completely cut off the communication. A council of war was therefore called by the earl of Moira, and it was determined immediately to evacuate Ostend. This difficult and laborious task was committed to colonel Vyse. On the morning of the 1st of July he began to embark the troops on bord the shipping, which lay at single anchor in the harbour, and the baggage and stores were in the vessels before night. The French entered the town as the last detachment embarked. While colonel Vyse was engaged in conducting the evacuation of Ostend, lord Moira with his main army repaired to Malle, about four miles from Bruges, on the great causeway to Ghent. The enemy pressing very fast, nothing was left but the most rapid dispatch. For that purpose they marched without tents and baggage. The French general was extremely eager to attack this corps; but so skilfully had their masterly leader arranged them on their march, that passing through a country over-run by myriads of enemies elated with victory, and eager for combat, encountering numberless defiles, through flats intersected with canals, and lately inundated, he did not afford them a single opportunity of attack. After undergoing incredible hardships,

1794.

to risk the person of the heir apparent. His lordship lands at Ostend; and finds the place surrounded by enemies;

determines to force his way to the duke of York.

Masterly execution and success of the design.

ships, on the 8th of July he joined the duke of York. Having conducted this important accession of strength in safety to the prince, lord Moira returned to Britain. The french generals were now advancing in all directions through the Netherlands, and the allies were apprehensive that Holland would again become the scene of invasion. The duke of York remained at Antwerp, to afford the Dutch time to strengthen their fortifications, and prepare for a vigorous defence. The prince of Orange, in the beginning of the month, had taken post at Waterloo; and here he was at first successful in repelling an advanced guard of the French. He was soon, however, compelled to abandon this post, by the advance of the republican armies to Brussels. He attempted afterwards to make a stand along the canal of Louvain; but the French bringing up continual reinforcements, he was obliged, with considerable loss, to retreat on the 16th across the Dyle, and established, for a short time, his headquarters at Nyle. The stadtholder solicited the Dutch, by repeated proclamations, to levy one man in ten throughout the United Provinces, But a great portion of the people were disaffected, and the rest were torpid. The French generals advanced in front of the Dyle towards Louvain. At the Iron Mountain, the brave though lately unfortunate Clairfait again attempted an ineffectual resistance, but was completely defeated by general Kleber, with the loss, in killed, wounded, and prisoners, of six thousand men; while the generals Lefevre and Dubois seized on the position of the abbey of Florival. It was at first the intention of the commanders of the combined armies to make a stand at Namur, and to form a line of defence from that city to Antwerp; but these successes of the republicans, and their rapid movements, totally disconcerted this plan. Namur was abandoned by general Beaulieu on the night of the 16th, leaving behind him only

Advances of the French.

The duke of York and prince of Orange are obliged to fall back.

two

CHAP. LIV. 1794.

two hundred men, who surrendered both the city and citadel on the first summons: a large quantity of artillery was found at Namur. On the 20th, the keys of the city were presented at the bar of the national convention.[h] In West Flanders the important pass of the Lier was forced about the same time: the French on the 23d sent a trumpeter to inform the inhabitants of Antwerp that they intended to visit them on the succeeding morning, which they did at eleven o'clock, and took quiet possession of that city. The allies had previously set fire to the immense magazines of forage which were there collected. Jourdain and his troops entered Liege, which immediately submitted to the victorious republicans. The fortresses of Lisle and Sluys were speedily captured[i]; the four towns taken from the French were successively retaken. The Austrians entirely evacuated the Netherlands, which were now overspread by the republican armies. The British retreated from Antwerp, and in number about twenty-five thousand men proceeded to Breda, which it was determined to defend, and a Dutch garison was stationed there for that purpose. The right column of the English marched through Breda on the 4th of August, while the left went round the town. They then took a position which had been previously marked out for them, about four miles distant. Having halted several days at Breda, which the prince of Orange was putting into a state of defence, they retreated in the end of August to Bois-le-duc, where a Dutch garrison of seven thousand men was posted. In the beginning of September general Pichegru approached with an army of at least eighty thousand men; and the advanced guard of the republicans attacked and stormed the posts on the Dommel, and the village of Boxtel, which though they made a most gallant

The Austrians entirely evacuate the Netherlands.

Intrepid stand of the British on the frontiers of Holland, but they are compelled to give way to immense superiority of numbers.

[h] New Annual Register, 1794, p. 400.
[i] Ibid. 401.

resistance,

CHAP. LIV.

1794.

resistance, found it impossible to withstand the numbers of the enemy. The duke, therefore, with so inferior a force, perceiving his situation totally untenable, on the 16th of September crossed the Meuse, and took a position which had been previously reconnoitred about three miles from Grave. So vigorous had been the resistance of the valiant British, that with twenty-five thousand men they withstood the republicans who were more than eighty thousand, from the beginning of July to the middle of September; in which time they made very inconsiderable advances, where they had the duke of York and his band to combat.[k] On the Rhine similar success attended the energetic efforts of the republicans. The king of Prussia having long manifested the coldest indifference to the confederacy, had early in this year announced to the German princes his determination to withdraw from the alliance. But Britain, judging of his good faith by her own, had conceived that he would bring into the field the forces for which he had stipulated, and for which he had been paid; in short, that a monarch would not descend to an artifice so totally unbecoming a gentleman, or an honest man, *as to procure the money of other people by false pretences.* But our government and legislature had proceeded on the supposition that Frederic William possessed virtues with which they found by experience he was not endued. The force which he furnished was very inferior to that which he promised, and their efforts were not such as might have been expected from a Prussian army, and were of little avail against the sincere, zealous, and ardent enthusiasm of the republican troops. On the 12th of July, general Michaud attacked the Prussians near Edickhoffen; and, to favour his operations in that quarter, advanced at the same time upon the

They retreat behind the Meuse.

Faithlessness of the king of Prussia.

Victories of the republicans on the Rhine.

[k] See Macfarlane, vol. iv. p. 489.

Austrians

CHAP. LIV. 1794.

Austrians before Spires. The contest was long and bloody, and both parties claimed the victory. On the following day the French renewed the attack on the Prussians with redoubled vigour. The battle lasted from early in the morning till nine at night. They attacked seven times, and at length carried by assault, amidst a terrible fire, the important posts fortified and occupied by the Prussians on Platoberg, the highest mountain in the whole territory of Deux Ponts.[l] The republicans captured great numbers of prisoners, and nine guns, besides ammunition, waggons, and horses. Continuing their series of attacks, the republicans successively defeated the German troops, and compelled them to seek safety by crossing the Rhine.[m] The emperor, alarmed by such a multiplicity of successes, endeavoured to stimulate the German princes to join him in efficacious measures to defend the empire against the irruption of the republicans; and for that purpose he addressed a memorial to the circles. His own resources, he stated, were utterly inadequate to the contest: the progress of the French was so rapid, that he must be inevitably obliged to withdraw his troops, and station them for the defence of his own frontiers, unless the empire should think proper to oppose the progress of the French with a sufficient force: these exhortations did not produce the desired effect; and no vigorous efforts were made by the empire to second its chief. The suspicion of treachery often springs from discomfiture; and ideas of this sort were very prevalent during this ill-fated campaign. Many of the Austrian officers incurred the imputation: it was said that a considerable number of these were infected with republican principles; and that not a few were corrupted with French gold. As, however, it would exceed the bounds of history to repeat the various

Address of the emperor to the German princes,

is totally unavailing.

Opinions of the operations and events of this campaign.

[l] New Annual Register, 1794, p. 401.
[m] Otridge's Annual Register, 1794.

surmises

surmises of suspicion, concerning which proof was not adduced to ascertain the truth of the rumours, the narrative shall not follow their details. One result, however, is, the conduct of the Austrians in many instances was so extremely inconsistent with the military ability which the officers of that nation have generally possessed in a great degree, that it implied either treachery or incapacity. The prince of Cobourg has been severely censured for the operations which terminated in the signal defeat at Fleurus, and the loss of the Netherlands. It was said, that knowing the efficacy of the British troops, he should not have left them at Tournay when he marched to encounter Jourdain: that the addition of such a force would have insured victory: that the plan of separation in which the position of the British troops originated, was very inimical to the objects of the campaign, and very unfit to oppose an enemy whose grand scheme was an extensive and closely connected line of co-operation: that the allies had stationed themselves at three angles of a triangle, while the republicans, by a segment of a circle, at once encompassed the whole, and broke the communication of the parts. These allegations, if true, might be all accounted for without any charge of disaffection against Cobourg, and upon a supposition that will be very generally admitted, that Jourdain and Pichegru, especially the latter, far surpassed Cobourg in inventive powers which formed new combinations adapted to the case. Cobourg, indeed, appears to have been a man of mere tactical experience, without genius, and therefore not fit to cope with skilful men of very great genius. This prince, after the evacuation of the Netherlands, was dismissed from his command, not without a rumour of imputed treachery; the truth of which I have no grounds to record as an historical fact; and I myself disbelieve, as his character was fair and honourable; as there is no evidence to support

Suspicions unfavourable to the prince of Cobourg.

are not supported by proof.

Cobourg a man of very mo-

CHAP. LIV.

1794.

derate abilities.

support such a charge, and as the disasters of the army under his command appeared to have arisen from the superior ability of the French generals, commanding a much more numerous force, inspired by the most ardent enthusiasm, which, whencesoever it arises, has always inspired men to efforts far beyond diplomatic calculation formed on the experience of common wars. The emperor certainly did not receive in the Netherlands the assistance from his Belgian subjects, the hopes of which probably had a considerable influence in inducing him to visit these dominions. His exhortation to them to rise in mass was indeed very unlikely to be regarded, as they did not conceive that, like the French, they were fighting their own cause. Their object was naturally their own security, and not the aggrandizement of the house of Austria: they did not choose to rise in mass to fight for a master, though the French had risen in mass to fight for themselves.

Able efforts of Clairfait.

AFTER evacuating the Netherlands, general Clairfait, leaving general Latour to cover Maestricht, posted himself at Juliers. Jourdain, in the beginning of September, prepared to march against Latour; but it was the middle of the month before he was ready for the assault. On the 18th the French in four columns attacked the whole line, from the Aywaille to Emeux. All the passages were forced with the bayonet, and the camps taken at full charge. The Austrians left two thousand men dead on the field of battle, and several of their battalions were reduced to one hundred and fifty men. Seven hundred prisoners, twenty-six pieces of large cannon, three pair of colours, one hundred horses, and forty ammunition waggons, were taken, as well as the general's own carriage, his secretary, and papers. The remnant of Latour's army was completely routed and dispersed: general Clairfait having endeavoured without effect to assist Latour,

Victories of the republicans.

with

with great skill and ability fortified himself at Juliers; and thither the republicans directed their efforts. On the 29th the French advanced from Aix-la-Chapelle, crossed the Roer, and attacked all the Austrian general's extensive posts, from Ruremonde to Juliers and Dureu. The conflict lasted the whole of the 29th and 30th of September, and was renewed on the 1st and 2d of October. The battle was extremely fierce on both sides; but Clairfait having lost ten thousand men, found it necessary to retreat as rapidly as possible. Juliers was abandoned to the French, and Clairfait retreated across the Rhine: the republicans conquered Cologne, Worms, Bonn, and in short reduced the whole left bank of the river. Pichegru, meanwhile was pressing on towards Holland. He informed the national convention, that with two hundred thousand men he would subjugate the United Provinces; and though the whole force which he required was not immediately sent, yet so numerous an addition was dispatched to his army, that he deemed himself able to proceed with his operations. In the beginning of October he invested Bois-le-duc, which in a few days surrendered. On the 20th of October, a sharp conflict took place between the republicans and the English, in which, though the event was not decisive, the loss was considerable. The duke of York now crossing the Waal, fell back to Nimeguen; and thither the French multitudes soon followed. The British army was posted to the left of Nimeguen, and the enemy in front of the town, where batteries were erected for the purpose of cannonade and bombardment. On the 4th of November a *sortie* was made in the night. The troops employed in the sally were about three thousand British, Hanoverians, and Dutch; and their object was to destroy the batteries which were newly constructed to annoy the city. It

The republicans reduce the whole left bank of the Rhine.

CHAP. LIV.

1794.

The British gain some advantages, but are greatly outnumbered.

appears that the French were by some means informed of this design, and were prepared to obstruct its execution. The conflict was extremely obstinate, but our troops were victorious, though with considerable loss. The British general, however, from the immense superiority of the enemy, found it necessary to evacuate Nimeguen. Philippine on the Scheld also surrendered: the French army on the right was fast advancing, and after the victories over the Austrians, laid siege to Maestricht. This city stood a regular investment in the beginning of October. During this month the republicans carried on their approaches, and whilst their parallels were forming, constructed their batteries. They repeatedly summoned the town to surrender; this denunciation having on the 30th been made in vain, the besiegers began to pour a most dreadful shower of shot and shells from all their works, with which they had surrounded the place. This fire, lasting during the whole of the night, demolished many public buildings and private houses, wounded and killed great numbers of the inhabitants. During three days this destructive assault continued: the governor at length, moved by the entreaties of the magistrates and people, entered into a negociation with general Kleber, and the city capitulated on the 4th of November. After the capture of Nimeguen and Maestricht, the operations were inactive during the rest of the month. But the troops, though not engaged in battles, were exposed to the severest hardships. The winter began with extreme severity: the soldiers were in want of clothing and other necessaries for encountering a winter campaign, which had not been foreseen in time to make adequate provision. In a country so much colder and damper than Britain, that season far exceeded its usual rigour. The consequence was sickness, and mortality among the soldiers, augmented

Winter campaign in Holland.

Sickness and mortality of the

augmented by the want of remedies and medical assistance sufficient for such an unexpected prevalence of distemper. It is probable, from the inaction of the French at this time, that they laboured under similar evils. Fresh and numerous reinforcements, however, arriving, enabled them, in December, to proceed with their operations. On the 7th of this month they made a fruitless attempt to cross the Waal in four rafts, from Nimeguen; two of the rafts were sunk by the English forces, who were stationed on the opposite side, near the village of Lant; one floated to the side occupied by the Dutch; and only one of the four regained that which was in the possession of the republicans. On the 11th the attempt was renewed, and with better success: they crossed the river above Nimeguen, and near the canal, in boats and on rafts, to the number of about five thousand men. Another detachment, however, attempting the passage, was repulsed with considerable loss. About the middle of December the frost became extremely intense; and in a few days the Maese and the Waal were frozen over. On the 27th the army crossed the river; the duke of York had, together with the prince of Orange, endeavoured to rouse the Dutch to such energetic resistance as had formerly saved their country from French invaders; but the circumstances of the times, and the dispositions of the people, were totally changed. Great numbers of the Dutch were now unwilling to oppose the French, and most of the rest conceived opposition hopeless. The exhortations of the princes were, therefore, altogether unavailing; and the duke of York considered all efforts as useless to save a people not desirous of saving themselves. Seeing military exertions unlikely to be farther useful in that country, he returned to England. The remaining forces were now entrusted to the command of

1794. British troops.

Intrepid efforts of their exhausted remains.

Attempts of the duke of York and prince of Orange to rouse the Dutch.

37278

CHAP. LIV. 1794.

general Walmoden; and an attempt was made to force the enemy to repass the Waal. For this purpose ten battalions of British infantry, with six squadrons of light cavalry, commanded by major-general Dundas, assisted by four squadrons and four battalions of Hessians, amounting in all to about six thousand five hundred infantry, and a thousand horse, advanced in three columns. At day-break on the 30th of December, attacking a great body of French at the village of Thuil, they carried it with the bayonet, and drove the republicans across the river. This success, however, was only temporary; the English army was, from the dreadful effects of the climate and season, rapidly decreasing. Private liberality was added to public expenditure in sending plentiful supplies of flannel waistcoats, and other fences against the cold; but the inclemency of the frosts was superior to every expedient: the chief part of the army was overcome with sickness. According to the reports of officers who were engaged in this dreadful service, the professional attention bestowed upon the sick was by no means adequate to the effectual discharge of that momentous duty. [n] In the month of January the French again crossed the Waal with seventy thousand men. This formidable host attacked the remains of the British army, and compelled them, though still making the most gallant resistance, to retire. Without tents, and unable to procure cantonments, the distressed heroes were obliged to pass the night, in this severe season, in the open tobacco sheds, or under the canopy of an inclement sky. The Dutch now urged the stadt-

[n] The details on this subject, not once or twice mentioned, but very frequently repeated through the periodical works of the time, daily, weekly, monthly, and yearly, and never contradicted, charge the medical department with extreme negligence. But candour must admit, that the prevalence of distemper was much greater than was to be foreseen or expected when the medical appointments were made, and that therefore a less minute attention could be bestowed on every individual patient, than the case required.

holder

holder to conclude a peace with the French, and finding him unwilling, their provinces and towns successively offered terms to the republicans, which were accepted. Zealand, and soon after Holland, entered into a capitulation. The stadtholder with much difficulty escaped from the Hague with his family, sought and found refuge in England: by the beginning of February the provinces had concluded a treaty with the French. As the republicans now possessed all the country between the British army and the coast of Holland, it was impossible to retreat in that direction; they, therefore, were obliged to take a much more circuitous rout towards the north coast of Germany. They repeatedly occupied strong positions, not with the vain intention of making a stand against three times their number, but to secure their retreat. Therein they had also to encounter many other difficulties. The partial thaws which occasionally took place only served to aggravate the misery of the troops, from the floods which succeeded these alterations in the temperature, and either impeded their progress, or obliged the soldiers to wade through torrents of mud and water, which sometimes reached even to their knapsacks. In this dreadful situation they were obliged to continue their march, or to be overwhelmed by the enemy. After a rout perhaps unequalled in the annals of military hardship, the exhausted remains of our army arrived at Bremen; and, having halted for some weeks, they embarked for England.

Immense superiority of numbers forces the English to evacuate Holland, which yields to the French arms.

Such was the melancholy termination of the British expedition to the continent: so little did the expenses, preparations, and military equipments of two years answer the purposes for which they were undertaken. Britain had gone to war to prevent an attack upon the rights of Dutch navigation: instead of one river, the whole seven

Campaign of 1794 disastrous to the British army.

CHAP. LIV. 1794.

provinces were now commanded by the republicans. She had gone to war to prevent French aggrandizement: one campaign had given France an accession of territory fertile, productive, and opulent, far surpassing all the conquests of her most ambitious and successful monarchs.

In Italy and Spain the republicans were successful as far as they employed their efforts: their exertions, however, in Piedmont, were not important. On the confines of Spain they made rapid advances: the Spanish government attempted to raise the subjects in mass; but this was an expedient that could succeed only in countries where the people, either being or conceiving themselves free, were inspirited by the ardour of liberty.

From such an issue to the efforts of the confederation, persons that did not exactly consider the specific case might very naturally draw unjust inferences. Such might conclude, that because the combination in question had been unsuccessful, that no future union for suppressing dangerous ambition could be successful, and therefore that the attempt would be vain. Were a concert to be proposed for reducing the exorbitant power of France, the events of 1794 might be quoted as warnings that the scheme would be impracticable; and assuredly the same means and conduct in similar circumstances would be unavailing. If the continental powers, pretending to join, were really to pursue different and even contrary objects; and if the French were inspired by the same spirit which, during their republican enthusiasm, animated and invigorated their exertions, the issue would certainly be discomfiture to the nominal coalition of really discordant parts. But if they were to unite in head, heart, and hand, to pursue an object which many might think more important for their ultimate safety than paltry indemnities; and if it were to happen that they had not to contend

tend against enthusiasm, but torpid indifference, it would by no means follow that the events of 1794 would be repeated. Even respecting Holland singly, it would be extremely hasty to deduce a general conclusion from the untoward issue of this disasterous campaign. The reduction of Holland did not arise merely from the arms of Pichegru, but in a great degree from the Dutch themselves. The majority of them were democratical, and received the French not only without opposition, but with gratitude and joy, as their deliverers and brothers. They might have withstood Pichegru when assisted by the gallant English, as without any assistance they withstood Turenne and Conde; and with much less aid they discomfited Alva and Parma. The Dutch have clearly manifested, that, if they exert themselves, no foreign power can keep their country in subjection, or even dependence. Should it ever happen that they choose to assert their independence, there is little doubt that they will be successful: whenever they have the will they have the power to be free.

Signal successes of Britain where she fought alone.

SIGNAL as had been the disasters of the British armies on the continent, where she acted alone, unincumbered with allies, and on her appropriate theatre, her success was momentous, and her glory transcendant. In the choice of naval commanders, our minister, through the war, has uniformly considered instrumentality; fitness for discharging the duties, and accomplishing the purposes of the appointment. The various commands, supreme and subordinate, were conferred on professional ability and character. Three powerful armaments were prepared for the campaign of 1794: one under lord Hood commanded the Mediterranean, reduced the island of Corsica, and protected the coasts of Spain and Italy: a second, under sir John Jervis, with a military force, headed by sir Charles Grey, reduced Martinico, Guadaloupe, St. Lucia, and

Her fleets paramount in the Mediterranean.

Acquisitions in the West Indies.

CHAP. LIV.

1794. Operations of earl Howe and the Channel fleet.

and some parts of St. Domingo. But the most illustrious monument of British naval glory was raised by earl Howe. During the preceding part of the war, France, conscious of her maritime inferiority to Great Britain, had hitherto confined her exertions to cruisers and small squadrons for harassing our trade. In the month of May, the French were induced to depart from this system of naval warfare. Anxious for the safety of a convoy daily expected from America, conveying an immense supply of corn and flour, of naval stores and colonial productions, the Brest fleet, amounting to twenty-seven ships of the line, ventured to sea under the command of rear-admiral Villaret. Lord Howe expecting the same convoy, went to sea with twenty ships of the line. On the 28th May he descried the enemy to windward. Admiral Pasley in the evening gave signal to the vanmost ships to attack the enemy's rear. Lord Hugh Seymour Conway attacked the Revolutionaire of 120 guns, and being soon supported by captain Parker of the Audacious, so damaged the enemy's ship that she struck; but escaping during the night, she was towed into Rochfort. The next morning the fleets resumed the conflict, but the intermission of a thick fog prevented its continuance. The fog lasted that and the greater part of the two following days. The sun occasionally breaking through the mist, showed to each other the direction of the fleets; and lord Howe employed this time in most masterly manœuvres to obtain the weather-gage, that he might compel them to fight when the atmosphere should clear; and at length he succeeded. On the 1st of June, the fog being dispersed, our admiral, from his former excellent dispositions, found an opportunity of bringing the French to battle. Between seven and eight in the morning, our fleet advanced in a close and compact line: the enemy finding an engagement unavoidable, received our onset with their

Skilful manœuvre to bring the enemy to battle. Battle of the 1st of June.

Numbers, force, and courageous

their accustomed valour. A close and desperate engagement ensued, presenting the French as combatants worthy of occupying the naval heroism of England. The Montague of 130 guns, the French admiral's ship, having adventured to encounter the Queen Charlotte of 100, was, in less than an hour, compelled to fly: the other ships of the same division seeing all efforts ineffectual against British prowess, endeavoured to follow the flying admiral; ten, however, were so crippled that they could not keep pace with the rest: but many of the British ships were so damaged that some of these disabled ships of the enemy effected their escape. Six remained in the possession of the British admiral, and were brought safe into Portsmouth, viz. La Juste of 80 guns, La Sans Pareille of 80 guns, L'America 74 guns, L'Achille 74, L'Impetueux 74, and Northumberland 74: these, with Le Vengeur, which was sunk, made the whole loss of the French amount to seven ships of the line. The victorious ships arrived safe in harbour with their prizes: the crews, officers, and admiral, were received with those grateful thanks and high applauses which Britain never fails to bestow on her conquering heroes. Earl Howe was by all ranks and parties extolled for his tactical skill, steady perseverance, and determined courage; first, in forcing the enemy, after every evasion, to a close action; and then in obtaining so signal an advantage over a fleet superior in its number of ships and of men, as well as in size and weight of [o] metal. The year 1794, surpassing in disaster by land the unfortunate 1777 [p] or 1781 [q], by sea equalled the glories of 1759.

CHAP. LIV.

1794.

efforts of the enemy; unavailing against the British fleet.

Decisive, glorious, and momentous victory.

[o] See Macfarlane's History, vol. iv. p. 461.

[p] Capture of Burgoyne's army.

[q] Cornwallis's army.

CHAP. LV.

Internal affairs of France. — The cordeliers. — The tenure of Robespierre's tyranny, the fear of foreign enemies. — A powerful party quickly formed against him. — Doomed to death. — Perishes on the scaffold. — His most iniquitous decrees rescinded. — Jacobin clubs entirely abolished. — Dawnings of social order begin to re-appear in France. — Britain. — Trials for treason. — Edinburgh. — Watt and Downie. — Watt's conspiracy not treason by the letter of Edward III.'s statute — treason by the judicial interpretation of that statute. — Condemned, and suffers death. — Alleged plot to assassinate the king — the allegation supported by no proof. — Trial of Thomas Hardy, John Horne Tooke, and John Thelwal, for high treason. — Ability of the lawyers on both sides. — Extraordinary eloquence of Mr. Erskine. — The accused are respectively acquitted. — Riots in the metropolis. — Meeting of parliament. — Mr. Pitt argues the downfal of the present system of France from the exhaustion of her finances. — Opposition contends, that the enthusiastic energy of the French would discover new resources, and alleges France to be returning to social order. — Discussion respecting the practicability of negociation. — Sentiments and reasons of the whigs who had separated from Mr. Fox. — Motions for an inquiry into the management of the war, and state of the nation — is negatived. — Parliamentary provisions for the approaching campaign. — Loan to the emperor. — Supplies. — Taxes. — Plan of Mr. Pitt for manning the navy. — Plan of Mr. Windham for the improvement of the militia. — Discussion of the late acquittals. — Statement of the affairs of the India company. — Marriage of the prince of Wales to the princess Caroline of Brunswick. — Provision for the establishment of their royal highnesses. — Arrangement for the payment of the prince's debts. — Application from the West India merchants. — Motion of Mr. Wilberforce for the abolition of the slave trade — is negatived. — Termination of Hastings's trial by an honourable acquittal. Mr. Pitt declares his majesty's willingness to make peace, if attainable

attainable with security, without regard to the form of French government. — Irish affairs. — Lord Fitzwilliam viceroy. — Misunderstanding between ministers and him concerning the extent and bounds of his powers. — He is recalled and succeeded by lord Camden. — Internal affairs of France. — The government of Robespierre the lowest abyss of revolutionary anarchy. — Commencing return of social order. — Constitution of 1795 *— two councils, and an executive directory of five. — French politicians now convinced, that a control of estates is necessary. — Death of the late king's son.*

CHAP. LV.

1794. Internal affairs of France.

WHEN the victories of the French in the Netherlands removed their apprehensions from foreign enemies, their attention was turned to internal tyranny. After the Jacobins had triumphed over the Girondists, they were themselves divided into two parties. A division in opposition to Robespierre was headed by Hebert, and called the faction of the Cordeliers; these men carried jacobinism to an extremity that even Robespierre himself did not approve, especially when he had made such strides to single despotism. In the frantic wildness of their civil and political doctrines, they somewhat resembled the *fifth monarchy men* of this country. They proposed, without any exception, equalization of property, and a community in every kind of goods or desireable objects: but in point of religious doctrines they were totally different, or rather their phrenzy took a quite contrary direction. The English anarchists were possessed with the madness of fanaticism, the French with the madness of atheism. Their inculcations of universal equality by no means suited Robespierre; they were arrested at his instance, accused, and put to death. Anacharsis Clootz, one of the number, preached to his fellow-sufferers atheism on the scaffold, and died blaspheming his God. The associates of Robespierre next followed: fear and envy doomed Danton to the scaffold. The tenure of Robespierre's

CHAP. LV.

1794. Tenure of the despotism of Robespierre, the fear of foreign enemies.

pierre's despotism was the alarms of the people: and as these decreased, his power decayed. Rapidly susceptible in all their impressions, the French people no sooner began to consider the atrocities which he had been perpetrating, than they became enraged against the tyrant: his enemies stimulated the prevailing sentiment, and suggested that he desired to establish himself as dictator. Fear, the most strongly operative of his two ruling passions, now goaded the tyrant to fresh proscriptions: he had still the armed force of Paris under his command, but he found that it was imbibing the sentiments of his adversaries. Encountering danger, his timidity palsied his usual sagacity. Billaud Varennes publicly accused him in the convention [a]: Barrere, his artful and versatile associate, perceived that his dominion was drawing to an end, and supported the accusation. Robespierre finding so powerful a party to be formed for his destruction, endeavoured to interest the violent anarchists in his favour, and imputed the charges against him to the machinations of loyalists and English: but his efforts being destitute of firmness and courage, were totally inefficient. When he repaired to the convention, Tallien rose, and in a vehement speech, painted in the most vivid colours all the atrocities under which France had groaned, and of which he regarded Robespierre as the principal author. He recapitulated the manifold details of his bloody tyranny, all the crimes he had authorised, the atrocious laws of which he had been the author, and the victims which he had sacrificed, earnestly endeavoured to make the convention blush at so disgraceful a slavery; and turning towards the bust of Brutus, invoked his genius; and drawing forth a dagger from his girdle, he swore that he would plunge it into the heart of Robespierre, if the re-

A powerful party formed against him.

[a] Segur, 111, 116. Ottridges's Annual Register, and New Annual Register, for 1794.

presentatives

presentatives of the people had not the courage to order his arrestation, and to break their [b] chains. The tyrant tried to reply, but he was not suffered to be heard; the convention doomed him and his chief associates to imprisonment. Attempts were made to excite an insurrection in his behalf; but his own cowardice prevented success. [c] Finding that all was lost, Robespierre shot himself with a pistol: but the justice of heaven would not suffer the scaffold to be deprived of so merited a victim; his wound rendered his punishment more lingering and tormenting. During the twenty-four hours which preceded his execution, he beheld the universal joy inspired by his downfal, and the horror which his person excited; he heard the reproaches of his colleagues, whom he had abased, and over whom he had tyrannised; the cries of joy of the victims whom he still wished to strike; and the imprecations of the whole people, whom he had for such a length of time deceived and oppressed. An object of public execration, no kind remembrance to strengthen his courage, no friend by his tears to soften his torments, he was compelled to appear before that revolutionary tribunal, by which his fury had condemned his own accomplices. He was led to the scaffold, with his brother, Couthon, Saint Just, and Lebas, his colleagues, Henriot his general, and the members of the rebellious *communes*. [d] An immense crowd followed him, reproached him with his crimes and his baseness, loaded him with outrages, and announced to him, by their acclamations, the judgment of posterity, which would place him in the list of the most odious and contemptible tyrants. The executioner, tearing off with violence the bandage which covered his wound, drew from him a hideous shriek, exposed him for some time to the eager

CHAP. LV. 1794.

[b] Segur, vol. iii. p. 117.
[c] Ibid. p. 118.
[d] Ibid. p. 120.

looks

CHAP. LV. 1794.

looks of vengeance and hatred, and at last dispatched him by a death as infamous as his life.

ROBESPIERRE attained his power neither by extraordinary abilities nor intrepid courage. All government and subordination being destroyed, the mere brutal force of the mob was paramount; and he rose by the adaptation of his manners to the lawless rabble, and the coincidence of his disposition with the predominant savageness of infuriated passion. Terror for a time maintained the supremacy of this monster. Fearing and envying all excellence, he employed his dominion in the destruction not only of eminent and able men, but the very qualities which lead to distinction. The sway of such a wretch, though only temporary, is a warning lesson to abilities and genius enamoured of revolution, that by succeeding in its projects it is eventually a ladder for exalting the most execrable and contemptible of mankind. Robespierre having thus experienced THE MERITED DOOM OF TYRANNY, the convention pursued measures which tended to alleviate the mischiefs that had accrued from the reign of atrocity, and to prevent the recurrence of the system of terrorism.

THE banished and imprisoned remains of the Gironde party were recalled or released, the most flagrant and infamous of Robespierre's decrees were rescinded, inviolability was restored to the members of the convention; and, to crown the salutary changes, the Jacobin club, that perennial source of anarchy and every flagrant enormity, was abolished. From this moment terror by degrees ceased to rule over France, and the dawnings of social order began to re-appear; religion again lifted up her hallowed voice, and a distant prospect of better days seemed to open to France.

Dawnings of returning order.

THE internal events which chiefly attracted the public attention in 1794, were the trials for treason, both in Edinburgh and London. In the

CHAP. LV.

1794. Britain.—Trials for treason. Edinburgh. Watt and Downie.

Scottish metropolis, a person named Robert Watt, being a member of some of the corresponding societies, had offered himself to government as a spy and an informer, but not obtaining from the officers of the crown the sum which he expected and required, he seriously projected to seize by force the castle of Edinburgh, the banks, and the excise-office; also the persons of the lord provost, and of the judges civil and criminal. This project he communicated in a paper to one Downie, a mechanic, and several other members of the societies. Downie appeared to accede, but the others rejected the proposal, and one of them being himself a spy, gave information to government; Watt and Downie were apprehended and tried.

Watt's conspiracy not treason by Edward III.'s statute.

By the union, the treason laws of England extend to Scotland. Watt's conduct amounted to a conspiracy to levy war against the king, which though not treason by the statute of Edward III. had been usually reckoned treason by judges interpreting that statute, as we have already observed.[e] The president of the court of session was head of a special commission appointed to try these persons, and in his charge, adopted the judicial construction[f], instead of the legislative definition, he described the crime to be treason, the jury admitted his explanation, and as the evidence of the fact was unquestionable, brought their verdict guilty. The defence set up for the prisoner acknowledged most profligate baseness, but pretended that he had proposed the plan to procure accomplices, that he might inform against them, and betray their counsels. His most plausible defence would have been the irrelevancy of the charge, and his counsel might have alleged, that the decisions of judges militating

Treason by the judicial interpretation of that statute.

[e] See the account of Lord Loughborough's charge to the grand jury, after the riots of 1780, vol. iii. p. 232.

[f] See lord president Campbell's charge to the jury of Edinburgh, in August, 1794.

CHAP. LV. 1794.

against the express definition of a statute, did not constitute the law of the land; and as the treason law then stood, a conspiracy to levy war was not one of its clauses: on this ground, however, Watt did not insist. Downie was also condemned, but recommended to mercy, and being found to be misled by ignorance rather than prompted by malignity, received a pardon; but Watt was executed.

Is condemned, and suffers death.

Alleged plot to assassinate the king.

About this time the public were greatly alarmed by the report of a plot to assassinate the king. The persons accused of this nefarious intent were Le Maitre, a watch-maker's apprentice; Higgins, a chymist's apprentice; and Smith, who kept a book-stall: the accuser was Upton, also a watch-maker's apprentice. According to this person's account, an instrument was to have been formed like a walking-stick, in the stick there was to be a brass tube, through which one of the conspirators was to blow a poisoned dart at his majesty, at a time and place to be afterwards determined. Such mischievous machinations had really been discovered, and so many more were believed, that the nation in general was in a state of alarm, and great numbers swallowed this improbable and absurd story. The men were committed to prison; but ministers, after investigating the evidence, found it so contradictory and incredible, that the alleged conspirators were set at liberty.

The allegations supported by no proof.

Trial of Thomas Hardy, John Horne Tooke, and John Thelwal, for high treason.

But the accused persons who chiefly occupied the thoughts of all parties, and drew the public attention from the successes of the French, were Messrs. Hardy, Tooke, and Thelwal, and their fellow-prisoners in the Tower. During the greater part of summer and autumn they had been kept in close confinement. In September a special commission was appointed, and in October opened by the lord chief justice Eyre, who, in a charge to the grand jury, appeared to consider the alleged facts,

1794.

as, if proved, amounting to high treason.[s] The grand jury forming the same opinion, found a bill of indictment against Thomas Hardy, John Horne Tooke, J. A. Bonney, Steward Kidd, Jeremiah Joyce, Thomas Wardell, Thomas Holcroft, John Ritcher, Matthew More, John Thelwal, R. Hodson, and John Baxter. John Martin, attorney, was afterwards indicted on a separate bill. On the 28th of October the trial of Thomas Hardy began: the charge consisted of nine overt acts, the substance of which was, that the accused had conspired to compass the king's death, by a conspiracy to hold a convention which should overturn government; and thus had conspired to levy war against the king, and to excite rebellion against his government, and that they had procured arms for that purpose. The legal amount of the charge therefore, was, a conspiracy against the constitution and peace of the kingdom. A conspiracy to levy war, as we have repeatedly observed, is not treason by the statute of Edward III. though it had been construed as treason by many interpreters of that statute. The evidence against Mr. Hardy was partly written, partly oral. Many of the papers charged as treasonable, had been communicated to the public in advertisements, and none of them were peculiar to him, but common to the whole corresponding society, in the name of which he acted as secretary; and none of them by any reasonable construction could amount to treason. The oral evidence consisted of two classes of men; the first, respectable persons of unquestionable and unquestioned veracity; the second, of hired spies, of course deserving no credit on their own account, but to be believed or not, according to the congruity of their testimony with other circumstances. The

[s] See judge Eyre's charge to the grand jury of Middlesex, in October, 1794.

CHAP. LV.

1794.

evidence of the first class proved little but what was more strongly expressed in the written documents; the evidence of the second set, though very prompt [h] in general assertion, yet, when by interrogation chained down to specific facts, whatever they advanced, maintained nothing stronger than what had appeared from the manuscripts and printed papers. The project of holding a convention indeed was proved, but there was no evidence that the purpose was treasonable; and the general result was, that the corresponding society, and Mr. Hardy as its secretary, had been active in conduct of a seditious tendency, a proposition very well known before, but totally irrelative to a charge of high treason. The trial lasted seven days, a period unprecedented in the history of capital prosecutions. The attorney-general, with a minuteness of detail, not only laudable, but necessary in his professional situation, spoke for nine hours, and displayed that candour of construction and liberality of sentiment which he has uniformly manifested in the successive stations that he has been called to fill. [i] The prisoner's defence was entrusted to two counsellors, both of distinguished ability. The one was Mr. Gibbs, eminent for extent and precision of legal knowledge, for clear and logical pleading; who acquired very high reputation by his efforts. The other was the honourable Thomas Erskine, who, though little more than forty years of age, and bred up to the profession of arms, for sixteen years he had been the shining ornament of the English bar, and exalted the judicial eloquence of his country to an equality with the best exertions of either Greece or Rome; and if in the Pitts, Fox, Burke, and Sheridan, these realms presented rivals to Demosthenes and Cicero in deliberative

Abilities of the lawyers on both sides.

Extraordinary eloquence of Mr. Erskine.

[h] See evidence of Groves, Lingham, Gosling, and Taylor, in Gurney's Account of the State Trials, 1794.

[i] See State Trials.

eloquence;

eloquence; they raised a rival to the best pleading of Cicero, in the judicial efforts of Mr. Erskine. With professional knowledge and science, this celebrated orator embodied a wide range of history and literature, and a thorough conversancy with human life, moral and political philosophy: such attainments, invigorated by genius, and adorned with persuasive grace, spoke through the heads to the hearts of his hearers in the most impressive eloquence. His exhibition on this trial, not inferior to Tully's defence of Milo, constituted a brilliant epoch in the oratory of the British bar.

The accused are respectively acquitted.

THE jury having maturely weighed the law, allegations, and proofs, returned a verdict, NOT GUILTY. The acquittal of Hardy gave very general satisfaction: impartial friends of the king and constitution were aware, that the best security of those was the upright administration of law even towards their enemies; and were pleased that a person was acquitted, whose proven acts had not contravened the statutes, which only established the crime of treason. Many who thought highly of the ministers, yet did not wish liberty, property, and life to be so much in their power, as at their instance to subject free-born Britons to capital punishment upon such vague and circuitous construction. The verdict in favour of Hardy was considered as a very favourable omen to the others who should be tried. After the intermission of several days, Mr. Horne Tooke was brought to the bar. The evidence for the crown, written and oral, consisted of nearly the same materials that had been already presented on the trial of Hardy. It appeared, however, that the present defendant had been much more guarded and moderate than most of the other votaries of reform, and had censured them as exceeding wise and reasonable bounds. He indeed appears never to have approved of annual parliaments or universal suffrage; and was friendly

CHAP. LV. 1794.

to the constitution of king, lords, and commons; though he wished a change in the latter branch, which he conceived would render it less liable to corruption. No treasonable act having been proved against the accused, the verdict of course was, NOT GUILTY. Mr. Tooke adduced, as exculpatory evidence, the duke of Richmond, Mr. Pitt, and others, who had been advocates of parliamentary reform. The questions put to these witnesses did not tend to produce any defence of Mr. Tooke's conduct, their substance related to the share taken by the witnesses themselves in parliamentary reform at a totally different period; they are therefore to be considered not as exculpations of the defendant, but as charges of inconsistency against the witnesses themselves, in their political conduct. As the innocence or guilt of Mr. Tooke did not depend on the facts which his majesty's ministers might, as ministers, either acknowledge or deny, their testimonies could answer no purpose relative to the charge, and were therefore unnecessary at his trial: other purposes, however, their adhibition might answer, by reminding the public, that they who were now inimical to one species of reform had once been favourable to another, they impressed that numerous class which, in estimating conduct often disregards circumstances, with an opinion that the ministers were apostates. The call upon Mr. Pitt, and the duke of Richmond to be witnesses at the trial of Mr. Tooke, was evidently not a measure of judicial exculpation, where none was required, but a political censure which so many were desirous of heaping upon ministers. The pleadings by Messrs. Gibbs and Erskine, were worthy of their preceding efforts; but Mr. Tooke himself was a very powerful counsel in his own favour.

AFTER this acquittal, which took place on the 22d of November, the attorney-general declined any farther

farther prosecution of the remaining members of the constitutional society; and on Monday the 1st of December, a jury being impannelled *pro forma*, Messrs. Bonney, Joyce, Kydd, and Holcroft, were acquitted and discharged. Next came the trial of Thelwal: it appeared from the evidence that, in his conduct, and still more in his expressions, this person had been much more violent than the two others, but nothing which was proved against him amounting to treason, he was accordingly acquitted.

Observations on their acquittal.

WHATEVER may have been the intentions of any of these individuals, as their acts by no means constituted legal guilt, their acquittal, bearing so high testimony to the purity of trial by jury, manifested the excellence of our judicature, in constitution and practice. No doctrine can be more inconsistent with the security of a free country than constructive treason, and none has the discriminating justice of the English law more severely reprobated. Constructive treason, indeed, is an engine of tyranny, under whatever forms it has been established. When the antimonarchical party predominated in England, the first victim of its uncontrolled injustice suffered for constructive and accumulative treason.[k] Earl Strafford, however morally culpable, or politically hurtful his conduct might be, was not legally guilty by any existing law, and was a sacrifice to party rage. Under Charles II. Russel and Sydney, by constructive treason, fell victims to monarchical tyranny. Instances have, in much more benignant reigns, occurred, of men suffering from wrested interpretations, when obnoxious to the ruling party; but under the equitable and enlightened principles and sentiments of the present age, whoever might be the accusers, the accused were assured of strict and legal justice.

k See trial of lord Strafford; Hume's History, vol. vi.; and State Trials.

CHAP. LV.

1794. Riots in the metropolis about persons called crimps.

THIS summer there was great disturbance in the capital, on account of villanies and cruelties asserted to have been committed in houses employed for enlisting recruits. It was affirmed, that various persons had been kidnapped to these abodes, and confined until they consented to become soldiers. Some discoveries of this kind having been made, and many more having been reported, the populace became extremely outrageous, and destroyed various houses alleged to be the scenes of these atrocities. After being violent and riotous for about six days, the ferment of the people at last subsided.

Treaty between Britain and America.

THIS summer a treaty was concluded between Great Britain and America, tending powerfully to promote the political amity and commercial benefit of both countries. Several changes took place in administration, making room for the whigs who had seceded from Mr. Fox at the commencement of the war: lord Fitzwilliam was made viceroy of Ireland, the duke of Portland third secretary of state, Mr. Windham secretary at war, and earl Spencer first lord of the Admiralty.

Meeting of parliament.

PARLIAMENT met on the 30th of December 1794: his majesty's speech urged the necessity of perseverance in the war, notwithstanding our disappointments; and augured the ultimate success of the allies, from the progressive and rapid decay of French resources, and the instability of every part of that unnatural system. The Dutch had, he observed, from a sense of present difficulties, made overtures for peace with the prevailing party in France; but no established government could derive security from such a negotiation. The most effectual means had therefore been employed for the farther augmentation of the forces; on whose valour, as well as on the public spirit of the people, his majesty professed he had the utmost reliance. In addition to the arguments frequently repeated for the continuance of the war, the minister laid

Mr. Pitt augurs the downfal of the present system of France, from the exhaustion of her finances.

great

great stress on the exhaustion of the French finances. By a very copious detail of their pecuniary proceedings, illustrated and embellished by his usual eloquence, he endeavoured to prove that France was in the gulf of bankruptcy, and that the ruin of the revolutionary system was inevitable, if we pressed them with vigour: peace would be totally impolitic, even if attainable; and with the present rulers it could not be permanent. In recommending peace, besides dwelling on the unfortunate events of the last campaign, opposition contended, that the French were beginning to return to social order; and that the hopes of subduing them by the exhaustion of their finances were chimerical. What were the proofs of such a failure? Was it their extraordinary energy of efforts and abundant supply of clothing and provisions? The causes which brought a regularly governed state to the last period of its military exertions, would, by no means, produce the same effect on a revolutionary government, which possessed all the existing means and resources of the country. To reduce them to the last extremity, there must be no land, no productions, no labourers, no soldiers, in short, no faculties of any kind in the whole extent of the territory. France had been driven to unprecedented exertions by an enthusiasm, the efforts of which the pressure of the confederacy had invigorated; there being such a spring to their enterprise, all calculations of resources formed on usual principles, must be altogether erroneous. Whatever hopes of success there might have been at the beginning of the war, they were now entirely vanished; and the confederacy was dissolved. Besides, let us consider the success of our arms: all our preparations, financial and military, had been totally useless. Why should we carry on a war in which all our efforts were to be wasted? The French were now

Opposition contends that the enthusiastic energy of the French would discover new resources; and alleges France to be returning to social order.

very

CHAP. LV. 1795.

very materially changed: the terrible system had entirely ceased[1]; jacobinism, so hostile to this country, was destroyed, and moderation was at least the assumption of a virtue, which shewed the real opinion of the people of France. The French republicans were now probably not disinclined to peace; let us therefore propose a negotiation. Whether successful or not, it would be extremely beneficial to this country: should our proffers be rejected, the consequence would be, that as we should then have right on our side, every person would unite in co-operating with government with the greatest vigour and firmness, in what then would be a just and necessary war. It was replied, that the disasters of the conflict arose from our allies: wherever we had fought alone, we had been signally successful. The balance of territorial acquisitions and pecuniary resources was greatly in our favour; and France had lost more in permanent value and present means, than the losses of all the allies united together. The alteration which had taken place was only the change of a name, and not of a substance. The present government was no more moderate than the government under Brissot, which had provoked this country to war. Peace with such a system could not be secure; we must, on the contrary, increase our precautions. Hostilities would again be commenced by France, when the military force of her enemies was reduced by a pretended peace. No treaty could be stable that should be made with a government so totally unfettered by every principle of religion and justice. In spite of partial disappointment, there was a moral certainty that we should ultimately prevail in the contest. These arguments were repeated in the discussion of

[1] This argument was chiefly employed by Mr. Wilberforce; who, though he had voted for the war, was this session the advocate of peace.

sundry

sundry motions[m] for the attainment of peace; and the majority of parliament being determined to persist in the war, the pacific propositions were successively negatived. Lord Grenville moved, in lieu of a conciliatory motion by the duke of Bedford, that a vigorous prosecution of the war was the most effectual means for producing a solid and permanent peace.

Discussion respecting the practicability of negotiation.

In the course of these debates, the practicability of negotiation with the present rulers, was very ably discussed on both sides. Ministers contended, that the French republicans entertained an irreconcileable hatred to this country and its inhabitants; and that the principal motive of their willingness to make peace with the other members of the confederacy was, that they might convert their whole rage against Britain. The very principles of the French republic were such, that to acknowledge its legitimacy, which must be done in case of a treaty, was to confess all other governments to be founded upon injustice. A peace, built on such grounds, would be not only disgraceful, but fatal to our own constitution, by undermining its principles, and empowering its many domestic enemies to represent it as iniquitous and oppressive.

Whoever carefully reviews the ministerial speeches of this session, will observe a very striking and important difference between their general scope and that of the preceding years of war. Their objections to peace now much more frequently consisted of arguments taken from the internal constitution of France. Though they did

[m] By the earl of Stanhope, on the 6th January, For no interference in the internal affairs of France. By Mr. Grey, on the 26th of February, That the present government ought not to be considered as precluding a negotiation for peace. By the duke of Bedford, on the 27th of February, to the same purpose. By Mr. Wilberforce, on the 27th of May, That in the present circumstances of France, the British government ought not to object to proposals for a general pacification; and that it was the interest of the nation to put an end to the war as soon as just and honourable terms could be obtained. See Parliamentary Reports for 1795.

not

CHAP. LV. 1795.

not directly and avowedly state the restoration of monarchy as a condition of peace, yet professing to make war for the sake of security, they very plainly intimated, that they knew of no other *means* of security, but the restoration of monarchy.[n] That they did not require the restoration of monarchy as an indispensable condition, but as the means of another condition, was a nice and subtle logical distinction, though in point of practical effect, there was little real difference; as peace upon that supposition could not be admitted, unless the proposed *means* existed. This doctrine, it may be observed, approached much nearer to the AVOWED doctrines of Mr. Burke, than any which ministers had before expressed. After the events of the last campaign, ministers could not really suppose the probability of such a restoration, by external pressure to be increased. They could not imagine that Britain and Austria, after the loss of Belgium and Holland, were nearer the establishment of the house of Bourbon, through their sole efforts, than when, in conjunction with Prussia and the greater part of Europe, they had been advanced on the frontiers of France. Such expectations, if they at all existed, must have been built on other grounds than the relative state of France and the confederates; and this change is to be accounted for from different causes.

Sentiments and reasons of the whigs who separated from Mr. Fox.

THE political objects and views of Mr. Burke, concerning the purpose of the war, as has been already shown, were materially different from those which ministers professed at its commencement to seek. His opinions had been adopted in a considerable degree by those members of the old whig aristocracy who separated from Mr. Fox. They conceived the monarchical and aristocratical part of

[n] See speeches of Mr. Pitt, lord Grenville, and Mr. Windham, at the beginning of the session, and repeatedly afterwards when the subject was agitated. See Parliamentary Debates for 1795.

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the constitution to be endangered from the dissemination of democratical principles. Mr. Fox's conduct they thought of a tendency too favourable to the preponderance of democracy. Whatever might be their diversities of opinion in other respects, Mr. Pitt and his party agreed with them in supporting the privileged orders. Through French principles, combined with a corresponding government, they deemed the property, dignity, and privileges of the higher ranks endangered; their ardent wish was to re-establish monarchy in France, as the means of preserving the monarchy and aristocracy of England. The introduction of so many of their members into the British cabinet evidently influenced the sentiments, or at least the counsels, of their colleagues, and the support of the royal cause in France, probably in compliance with their wishes, became one of the chief objects of military schemes; and hopes were sanguine as wishes were ardent. These were warmly cherished by the representations of the emigrants, who, either in their conception or reports, or both, extravagantly magnified the number and force of the loyalists. Ministers, especially Mr. Windham and others who had recently come into office, appear to have believed the greater part of what the emigrants stated, and to have projected plans of powerful and effectual co-operation which would, they fancied, promote the re-establishment of royalty in France. These accessions to the cabinet, with the political and military measures which they contributed to produce, had probably their share in effecting this difference in the ministerial reasonings of that session.

Motions for an inquiry into the management of the war, and state of the nation,

PERCEIVING ministers and a very great majority of parliament totally averse to every overture for accommodation with France, opposition proposed to inquire into the state in which the nation was placed by the war. The management of this momentous subject was undertaken by Mr. Fox; and

on

CHAP. LV. 1795.

on the 24th of March he moved that a committee of the whole house should be appointed to consider the state of the kingdom. After our discomfiture at Saratoga, in the American war, he had made a similar motion [o], and it had been received, though our situation was far from being equal in peril to the present. The most evident necessity now dictated an inquiry: the war had lasted only two years, and in that short period, the enemy had made a progress unknown to former æras; they had overcome all resistance, and acquired such an extent of territory as placed them in the most alarming state of superiority to the confederacy which had been formed for reducing their ancient power. The losses of Britain had been immense, both in killed and prisoners. [p] Our pecuniary expenditure had amounted to seventy millions, and the permanent taxes which it had occasioned, to three millions. What return was made to the nation for this enormous profusion of blood and treasure? Our subsidies to our allies had been equally useless as our own exertions. What did England gain by subsidising Sardinia? Were the British constitution, independence, and power; the liberty, property, and lives of British subjects, more secure from the guarantee of the king of Sardinia? What had been the effect of our subsidy to the king of Prussia? that our money had been paid, and that he had not performed the stipulated service. If the war continued, other subsidies would be wanted, which would be equally unavailing. Affairs in Ireland also demanded investigation [q]; the extreme irritation of the great mass of the people ought to warn ministers not to render themselves responsible for the very possible event of

[o] See vol. iii. p. 23.

[p] This position he attempted to prove by a detailed enumeration.

[q] Mr. Fox particularly alluded to the recal of earl Fitzwilliam, which is included in a subsequent part of the narrative.

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its dismemberment from the British empire, by the refusal of an inquiry into the discontents of its inhabitants. In England, dissatisfaction was prevalent; an idea pervaded the mass of the people, that the commons could not fairly be reputed the representatives of the nation [r], from their undeviating compliance with every measure proposed by ministry, notwithstanding the ill success with which they had conducted the war. What were the grounds for so extraordinary a confidence in men whose schemes were continually miscarrying? Even suppose the war had been just (which he was not now canvassing,) did the succession of plans and series of events afford reasonable grounds for reposing unlimited confidence in the present counsellors of his majesty, as wise, energetic, and effective war ministers? If they really deserved trust, they would not resist inquiry; men that dreaded a scrutiny into their conduct, afforded the clearest presumption that it would not bear examination. No man, conscious of the able and the upright discharge of his duty, will flinch from an investigation of his actions. Mr. Pitt objected to inquiry on the plan proposed by Mr. Fox, as too extensive to be compatible with the other business of parliament. Parts of his objects were inexpedient and unreasonable: Mr. Fox had exaggerated our losses, and detracted from our advantages, and on the whole had exhibited an unfair statement of our situation; and the inquiry at present would be productive of many mischiefs, and no benefit. It was replied, both by Messrs. Sheridan and Fox, that Mr. Pitt, instead of meeting it, had shifted the question; that if Mr. Fox had misrepresented the situation of the country, the means of confuting his statements were not the assertions of the party concerned, but a fair investigation of conduct. These arguments, though it

[r] See Parliamentary Debates, March 27th, 1795.

must

CHAP. LV.

1795.

must be owned not entirely without weight, did not impress the majority of the commons. Credit was given to ministers on their claims of confidence, and Mr. Fox's motion was negatived: a similar proposition by earl Guilford in the house of peers, was also rejected. Specific motions were afterwards made in both houses for an inquiry respecting Irish affairs, but with as little success.

are negatived.

Parliamentary provisions for the approaching campaign.

THE preparations for the ensuing compaign, early in the session came under the consideration of parliament. One important branch of these was to strengthen our allies. The emperor had signified his earnest inclination to make the most vigorous efforts against the common enemy, but intimated the necessity of pecuniary assistance, in a loan of four millions, on the credit of the revenues, which arose from his hereditary dominions. Through such an accommodation he proposed to bring two hundred thousand men into the field. His Britannic majesty expressed his wish that the emperor should not only receive the desired supply, but also, that by means of a similar loan to a greater extent, he might be enabled to employ a still more considerable force. A message to that effect was, on the 4th of February, delivered to the house of commons, and in a few days after to the house of peers. Mr. Pitt made a motion for the loan required: in discussing this proposition, the anti-ministerial party naturally took a view of the Prussian subsidy, and its misapplication. The ministers, without justifying the conduct of the king of Prussia, contended that the present loan would be powerfully conducive to the purposes of the war; that there would be undoubted security from Austria for the performance of the contract, and that the risk was not so great as the probable advantage. Mr. Pitt therefore proposed that Britain should guarantee the loan: a similar proposition was made in the house of peers, and a law was passed, pledging

Loan to the emperor.

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ing the national faith for the security of the sums borrowed by the emperor. A convention, agreeable to the intimation of the king, was concluded between his majesty and the emperor of Germany, for enabling him to bring a still greater force against the enemy. The whole amount raised for Austria under the guarantee of parliament amounted to four million six hundred thousand pounds.

Supplies.

THE force required by Britain for the service of 1795, amounted to one hundred thousand seamen, one hundred and twenty thousand regulars for the guard and garrisons of the kingdom, sixty-six thousand militia, and forty thousand men employed partly in Ireland and partly in the West Indies and the plantations, exclusive of fencibles and volunteers, foreign troops in British pay, and embodied French emigrants. The sums required to maintain this force, with the extraordinaries and ordnance, for the Sardinian subsidy, and all the public services of the year, amounted to twenty-seven millions five hundred and forty thousand pounds, requiring a loan of eighteen millions. The taxes were upon wine, foreign and British spirits, tea, coffee, insurances, foreign grocery and fruits, timber, increase of post-office duty by abridging the privilege of franking, and on hair powder. The loan having been raised by private contract and not by open competition, was severely censured; the terms were alleged to be, at least, five per cent. more favourable to the contractors than was necessary.

Taxes.

Plan of Mr. Pitt for manning the navy.

IN furnishing the requisite force for the current year greatly surpassing the demands of former exigencies, it was necessary to consider the most speedy and effectual means for levying soldiers and sailors. Mr. Pitt proposed a new plan for manning the navy, and instead of attempting to throw the burden on any particular class of society, to call upon the public, by requiring the contributions of all districts: he proposed as much as possible to

CHAP. LV.

1795.

supersede the necessity of pressing sailors, which besides its hardships, was accidental and partial in its operation towards the owners of ships; he therefore moved, that a supply should be required from the mercantile marine in general. The proprietors of merchantmen were the most deeply interested in maintaining the naval superiority, by which their valuable property was protected. Let them contribute one man out of every seven, with smaller proportion from the coasting trade; and also a certain number from those who were employed in inland navigation; and that besides one man should be furnished by each parish. After a few modifications the proposition was passed into a law, and officers were immediately dispatched to superintend the several kinds of levy. Mr. Windham, as secretary at war, reviewed the means of internal defence, and proposed to render the militia more efficient, to augment its number, improve its discipline, and assimilate it as much as possible to the army. To effect this object it was necessary to employ expert subalterns, and to encourage such to offer their services, he proposed an additional allowance to be made to their pay in time of peace, and a bill for that purpose was introduced. Messrs. Fox and Sheridan opposed it as tending to increase the influence and patronage of ministers, and to place the whole military strength of the kingdom under their immediate direction; a step which was evidently preparatory to the complete establishment of arbitrary power; but their objections were overruled. With a view farther to promote the discipline of the militia, it was judged requisite to introduce artillery into that body. The bill authorised the pressing into the regular corps, those militia men who should become expert in the management of artillery. It also permitted those privates who were inclined to enter into the navy, or in the artillery, to quit the militia service. These and other clauses tending to encourage militia men to become

Plan of Mr. Windham for the improvement of the militia.

become soldiers, encountered strong objections; but the bill was passed by a great majority. This year had been remarkable for scarcity and dearth; the price of provisions was so high that the pay of soldiers was insufficient, and great complaints prevailed. Government, without communicating with parliament, had bestowed an extraordinary allowance to make up for the high price of bread. Though the measure was not only humane but necessary in itself, yet the mode of carrying it into execution was disapproved, as tending to establish a precedent for maintaining soldiers without the consent of parliament. The attempt was represented as the more inexcusable, as parliament was sitting, competent and disposed to provide supplies according to the circumstances of the case; and a resolution was proposed, declaring it illegal to augment the pay of the army without the consent of parliament. Ministers vindicated the measure as merely temporary and the result of necessity; that no increase was intended, but a mere occasional supply. After a warm discussion, in which many constitutional topics were introduced, the motion was negatived.[s]

CHAP. LV. 1795.

Discussion of the late acquittals.

MOTIONS were made by the opposition in both houses to repeal the suspension of the habeas corpus act. The discussion of that subject introduced a review of the prosecutions and trials for high treason: the acquittals had been incidentally mentioned in various debates about the beginning of the session; but on the 5th of January, Mr. Sheridan made a direct motion on the following grounds: the preamble to the suspension stated, that a dangerous and treasonable conspiracy existed in this country; but a verdict in court had shewn this conspiracy to be a mere fabrication. The parties had undergone the strictest trial, and no pains had been spared for

[s] See Parliamentary Reports of 1795.

CHAP. LV. 1795.

their crimination. What were the proofs of the supposed conspiracy? An arsenal furnished with one pike and nine rusty muskets, and an exchequer containing nine pounds and one bad shilling. These were the ways and means with which the conspirators proposed to overturn the government of Great Britain. No treason had in fact been brought to light, the alleged ground of the suspension did not exist, therefore the suspension, which in fact suspended the whole British constitution, was an unnecessary infringement of the rights of Britons. Mr. Windham maintained, that the favourable verdict in the late trials arose from the ignorance and incapacity of the juries, to discern the true state of the case. The real object of the societies was to overturn the constitution, and the principles imported from France would produce the worst effects, unless they were opposed with the strictest vigilance. The determination of a jury, was no proof of the non-existence of a conspiracy. There was, indeed, the strongest ground for believing that a desperate conspiracy had existed and still existed. From their whole conduct was it not probable that the designs of the societies were the destruction of the monarch and the constitution? The guilty were often acquitted in courts of justice; not because they were considered as innocent, but merely because there was no strictly legal evidence produced to confirm the truth. A doubt of their guilt was sufficient in the breast of the jury, but by no means to clear the character of the accused. The verdict in their favour could not, therefore, operate as a motive for repealing the act, even were we to admit that their indictment for high treason had not been supported by legal proofs: if the judicious and unbiassed public looked upon them as guilty of an attempt for which the law had not provided a due punishment, it was the duty of parliament to make such provision. The motion for

CHAP. LV.

for repeal was rejected; and before the term of the act expired it was renewed.

1795.

Mr. Dundas brought forward his annual statement of the affairs of the East India company, in the month of June. The result of the details was, that the company's affairs were improved upwards of one million four hundred and twelve thousand pounds. Notwithstanding the discouragements and obstructions arising from the war, and while the European markets were shut against them, their sales were more extensive than ever. The surplus revenue would not be so large in future, on account of our appropriation of a part to the just claims of the army. There was now a great and necessary military establishment; but the company had no higher rank in their service than colonel; this deprived eminent military characters of that rank in which they often repose as the best part of their reward: there was also, at present, but a slow progression of inferior stations. He proposed a certain proportion of general and field officers at the different settlements. He farther moved, that whereas before officers returning from India received no allowance from the company, those who had served twenty years in the army should retain full pay for life. If sickness required the return of an officer, he thought he ought to be allowed, upon the opinion of a medical man, to leave India without loss of rank or pay.

Statement of the affairs of the India Company.

During this parliamentary session an event of great national importance took place, in the marriage of the heir apparent to the throne of these kingdoms. His highness espoused his royal father's niece, princess Caroline, daughter of the duke of Brunswick, and his duchess Augusta of England. Lord Malmsbury was employed to conduct the royal bride from her father's court. Arriving at Hamburgh, her highness was conveyed in a squadron commanded by commodore Payne. On the

Marriage of the prince of Wales with the princess Caroline of Brunswick.

CHAP. LV. 1795.

the 7th of April she landed at Greenwich Hospital, and in one of his majesty's coaches, attended by a suit of carriages, and escorted by a party of the prince's own regiment, she proceeded to town, amidst troops of dragoons who were stationed on the road in honour of the princess. Hundreds of horsemen and carriages, with immense crowds of spectators, testified their joy at the arrival of the young and beautiful stranger. The people cheered the princess with loud expressions of love and loyalty, and she very graciously bowed and smiled at them as she passed along. Having arrived at St. James's, the people with the ardent eagerness of spontaneous loyalty, which flows from the generous and manly breasts of freeborn Britons, continued their congratulations. Her highness standing with the prince at the window, addressed them concisely, but impressively, in the English language: "Believe me, I feel very happy and delighted to see the GOOD and BRAVE English people — the best nation upon earth."[t] The prince afterwards accosted his countrymen with the grace by which he is so eminently distinguished: both were received with the most rapturous applause. On the 8th of April the marriage of his royal highness George prince of Wales and the princess Caroline of Brunswick was solemnized, in the chapel royal, by the archbishop of Canterbury. The nuptials were celebrated with a magnificence suitable to the rank of the illustrious parties. The income of the heir apparent was greatly inferior to the revenue of predecessors in that exalted situation, since his illustrious family was called to the throne. It had never amounted to more than 60,000*l.* in the present reduced value of money; whereas the establishment of his grandfather and great-grandfather was 100,000*l.* when the value of money was so much

[t] See Oulridge's Annual Register for 1795, p. 15.

higher.

higher. Hence the benignant liberality of his highness found it impossible to confine his expenditure within his annual receipts.

On the 27th of April, a message from his majesty to the commons, announcing the marriage of the prince, expressed the king's conviction that a provision would be made for the suitable establishment of the prince and princess. It also stated, that his highness was under pecuniary incumbrances, and recommended to parliament his gradual extrication, by applying to that purpose part of the income which should have been settled on the prince, and appropriating to that object the revenues of the duchy of Cornwall. When the message was taken into consideration, it appeared that the debts of his highness exceeded six hundred thousand pounds. The civil list by no means could bear even the gradual liquidation of so heavy a debt. It was not in the present state of public affairs proposed to call upon the nation for such a sum; whence was it then to be liquidated but by savings from the prince's income. It was fair, reasonable, consistent with the dignity and policy of the country, that his highness should be placed on an equal footing with former princes of Wales. One hundred thousand pounds, eighty years ago, constituted the whole revenue of his great-grand-father George II. then prince of Wales; and the income of his grand-father, thirty years after, amounted to the like sum, exclusive of the duchy of Cornwall. A hundred and twenty-five thousand pounds at present, was not more than a hundred thousand sixty years ago. It was proposed that a hundred and twenty-five thousand, together with thirteen thousand arising from the duchy of Cornwall should be settled on the prince, of which seventy-eight thousand pounds should be appropriated to the liquidation of his incumbrances, and that an arrangement should be made to prevent the contraction

Provision for the establishment of their highnesses.

Arrangement for the payment of the prince's debts.

CHAP. LV.

1795.

traction of farther debts. This proposition encountered several objections, and various substitutes were proposed: why might not the prince's life-interest in the duchy of Cornwall be sold? It would fetch three hundred thousand pounds; successive ministers had appropriated the revenue of the duchy of Cornwall to the civil list: a contribution, therefore, from the civil list ought to have been made at present. It would not be a gift from the civil list, but the payment of the balance of an account. After repeated and various discussions, the plan proposed by Mr. Pitt was adopted, and commissioners were appointed to superintend the discharge of his incumbrances. Provisions were also made to prevent the farther contraction of debts; and a law was passed to prevent future princes of Wales from being involved in similar difficulties. A jointure of fifty thousand pounds per annum was settled upon the princess of Wales, if she should survive his royal highness.

Application from the West India merchants.

THIS session the West India merchants, especially of Grenada and St. Vincent's, laboured under great pecuniary embarrassments. In consequence of insurrections and other calamities, they were much injured in their property, and suffered great inconveniencies in their commerce. From these gentlemen a petition was brought to parliament, praying for such relief as might be judged most expedient. Mr. Pitt reminded the house of the very great benefits which had accrued to the mercantile world two years before, from the means devised for supporting commercial credit, and proposed a similar plan to answer the exigencies of these merchants, by issuing bills of exchequer for their accommodation. Mr. Fox strongly reprobated this interference of the public in private concerns: it tended to create an influence over the great commercial body, that would place it in the most abject dependence on ministers. Hence they would become the invariable

variable supporters of all governments, good or bad, in expectation of assistance from them in every pecuniary difficulty. Of the many innovations lately introduced, this was one of the most dangerous and alarming: it would reduce a class of people, hitherto remarkable for their independent spirit, to a situation of subserviency, that would necessarily destroy all their former importance, and subject them entirely to the direction and management of future administrations. These considerations not weighing with the majority of parliament, the proposed relief was granted. An attempt was made in the house of commons this session to attach blame to the conduct of sir Charles Grey and sir John Jervis; but the subject being discussed, it was found that there was no reason for censure, and that every part of their proceedings had been highly meritorious. The thanks of the house, voted in the preceding session, were confirmed.

Motion of Mr. Wilberforce for the abolition of the slave trade.

Mr. Wilberforce this year recalled the attention of the house to a subject which appeared at present to be dormant; this was the slave-trade, so zealously reprobated by one party, as equally criminal and disgraceful; and no less warmly justified by the other, as absolutely necessary in the actual situation of the commercial and colonial affairs of Great Britain. He reminded them, that a formal resolution had passed in the session of 1792, that after the expiration of the month of January 1796, it should no longer be lawful to import African negroes into the British colonies and plantations. Besides repeating former arguments, he mentioned the manifest disposition of the newly-imported negroes to rise against the white people, and of the consequent necessity of maintaining a numerous military force to keep them in awe and subjection. He proposed a final abolition of the slave-trade; but

CHAP. LV.

but after a very warm debate, the motion was negatived.

1795. is negatived. Termination of Hastings's trial, by an honourable acquittal.

THIS session the trial of Mr. Hastings, after having lasted seven years, terminated in his honourable acquittal. Out of twenty-nine peers who pronounced judgment on the occasion, twenty-three declared him innocent. The East India company, conscious of the immense advantages which they had derived from the exertions of this extraordinary man, discharged the whole expense of the trial, and also presented him with a moderate pecuniary gift, to prevent from indigence so illustrious a servant, who had always attended so much more effectually to the interests of his employers than to his own. Though every authentic and impartial historian must bestow high praise on the political ability which saved India, yet he must allow, that there were certain portions of his conduct manifestly inconsistent with the rules of justice which prevail in Britain. Whoever considers the Rohilla war, the administration of the revenues, the presents, the expulsion of Cheyt Sing, and the seizure of the treasures of the begums, with the documents, testimonies, and circumstances that appeared to the committee, and afterwards even on the trial, may find sufficient grounds for a man, feeling and reasoning as an Englishman, to impute culpability — great culpability, to Mr. Hastings. His subsequent justification of conduct, apparently blameable, does not render the inquirer into these appearances, and very prominent appearances, of wrong, the object of censure. Men must judge from probability, until it be proved false: apparent culpability is a proper subject of investigation, although, on inquiry, either proof should be wanting, or even innocence or merit should be established. Those who consider the imputation of unworthy motives to the accusers of Mr. Hastings, confirmed

confirmed by his acquittal, reason very inconclusively. Where is the evidence for such allegations? The discussion of the conduct of the governor-general came before a committee, in the unforeseen progress of inquiry: Mr. Burke, a member of the committee, agreed with all the other members in deeming certain proceedings stated before them, either in oral or written evidence, if true, extremely reprehensible. Examining the affairs of India still farther, and not discovering the exculpatory matter which was afterwards established before the lords, he and many others of both the political parties which then prevailed, thought there were sufficient grounds to justify parliamentary impeachment. We can no more justly blame Burke, Fox, and Sheridan, for moving an impeachment on the chief subjects, and other gentlemen on less important charges, nor the house of commons for agreeing to the motions, although the peers afterwards acquitted the defendant, than we should blame an attorney-general for commencing a prosecution upon the probable grounds of oral and written evidence; or a grand jury for finding a bill, although the person arraigned should, on his trial, have a verdict in his favour of *not guilty*. The merits of Mr. Hastings are intrinsically great, and do not require any extraneous exaggeration; and those who wish to enhance his character by censuring his accusers, manifest an incorrect and inadequate idea of the subject of their deserved applause.

Such were the principal events during this session, which terminated on the 27th of June. His majesty's speech contained one passage totally different from the general tenor of ministerial reasonings, which had uniformly exhibited the existing government of France as incompatible with any ideas of secure peace. Mr. Pitt, indeed, had, in discussing one of the motions for peace, declared his majesty's willingness to terminate the war, on just

Mr. Pitt declares his majesty's willingness to make

CHAP. LV.

1795.

peace, if attainable with security, without regard to the form of French government.

just and honourable grounds, with any government in France, under whatever form which should appear capable of maintaining the accustomed relations of peace and amity with other countries; but he had constantly represented the government which then subsisted, as incapable of maintaining such relations. His majesty expressed hopes, that peace would eventually arise from the internal state which had now commenced. "It is impossible to contemplate the internal situation of the enemy with whom we are contending, without indulging an hope, that the present circumstances of France may, in their effects, hasten the return of such a state of order and regular government, as may be capable of maintaining the accustomed relations of amity and peace with other powers." Though this declaration afforded only a distant prospect of peace, yet intimating its attainableness without the restoration of monarchy, it gave great satisfaction to all those who did not think a counter-revolution in France indispensably necessary to British security. By the party which reprobated every project of peace with the French republicans, it was strongly disrelished.[u]

Irish affairs

Lord Fitzwilliam viceroy.

IRISH affairs at this season were extremely interesting and important. When earl Fitzwilliam accepted the viceroyalty as he afterwards declared, he had been authorised to complete the catholic emancipation[x]; and as soon as he entered upon his office he had prepared to put this popular measure into execution. The chief members of the Irish ministry at this time were the Beresford party, always inimical to the encouragement of catholics, but ardent

[u] To this declaration Mr. Burke alludes in the beginning of his Regicide Peace: he construed it in the following manner: "Citizens Regicides! whenever you find yourselves in the humour, you may have a peace with us. That is a point you may always command as secure. We are constantly in attendance, and nothing you can do shall hinder us from the renewal of *our supplications.*"

[x] See lord Fitzwilliam's letter to lord Carlisle.

supporters

supporters of most of the measures recommended by the English ministers. Lord Fitzwilliam dismissed from their offices some of these persons, and chose in their place others favourable to the grand system which he had in view. The steps for accelerating the catholic emancipation passed without animadversion from the English ministry; but the dismissal of Mr. Beresford and his adherents gave great offence to the cabinet of London. Lord Fitzwilliam refusing to change his arrangements, he was recalled, and lord Camden, son to the illustrious judge, was appointed his successor. Lord Fitzwilliam arrived in Britain, made his appearance in parliament, challenged ministers to prove that his measures deserved the blame which their conduct intimated, and demanded an inquiry. Ministers contended, that no blame was attached to lord Fitzwilliam, and therefore no inquiry was necessary for his vindication; and that there were reasons of state which rendered the discussion altogether improper: the motions in the respective houses for an inquiry were negatived.

misunderstanding between him and ministers, as to the extent and bounds of his powers.

He is recalled and succeeded by lord Camden.

In the ardent enthusiasm of misunderstood liberty, the French had proceeded, as we have seen, with rapid impetuosity, to break down, one after another, all the embankments of order and regular government, which reason and policy had constructed, or time had collected for restraining the torrent of impetuous passion. Many of the first national assembly had proposed a wise mixture of democracy, aristocracy, and monarchy; but the visionary theories of fanciful metaphysicians, conceiving in mankind a perfection which mankind do not possess, inculcated new schemes of legislation, totally unfit for human beings; and excluded religion, the great moderator of violent, and corrector of vicious passions. With these natural restraints upon the individual, they removed the artificial distinctions of rank and subordination, which conduced to the welfare

Internal affairs of France.

CHAP. LV.

1795.

welfare of society; they destroyed the aristocracy, which best attempers and controls monarchical dictation, and popular fury. Allowing their king too feeble a power, the constitutionalists of 1789 rendered the multitude paramount; gave them unlimited sway, after they had loosened the principles that might have checked the most inordinate and outrageous abuses of their power; and thus they sowed the seeds of all future excesses. The republicans of 1792, pursuing the same levelling principle to a still greater extent, trusted that they could govern without a monarch, as the constitutionalists of 1789 had governed without separate orders and states. By the all-ruling mob, a junto of scholars and ingenious men, with learning, eloquence, subtlety, and theoretical refinement, proposed to govern without a king; but the engine which they moved they could not command. The constitutionalists unmuzzled, and the republicans goaded, the wild beast that, though at first soothed by their caresses, was soon turned upon themselves, with the unbridled licence of passion; impiety and cruelty increased; and democracy was swallowed up by anarchy. In five years, the French had experienced all the changes from arbitrary monarchy, through emancipation, liberty, licentiousness, anarchy, and despotic terror. The æra of Robespierre, the season of atheism, anarchy, and terror, was the lowest abyss of the French revolution. There is, as the first[y] of modern historians observes, and one[z] of the first repeats, an ultimate point of exaltation and depression, which, when human affairs reach, they return in a contrary progress. From the destruction of Robespierre, the proceedings of the French began to show some distinct tendency to social order. The sway of the odious tyrant, terrible as it was while it lasted, was not without its salutary

The government of Robespierre the lowest abyss of revolutionary anarchy.

Commencing return of social order.

[y] Hume, vol. iii. at the conclusion of Richard III.

[z] Robertson, introduction to Charles V.

effects.

effects. It very clearly demonstrated the terrible consequences of a political society without subordination, government, and religion. But the progress of the return from anarchy to social order was slow, and often interrupted by formidable conspiracies. The Mountain long predominated, and opposed, with all its might, changes which tended to strengthen the Girondine party, whose vengeance it dreaded.[a] The Girondists, constitutionalists, and other enemies to Jacobin anarchy, gradually coincided in one great object, the formation of a regular constitution, which should contain a diversity of states, with reciprocal check and control. The chief provisions of this new system were two councils, both chosen by the electoral assemblies. The first, consisting of five hundred members, was stiled the legislative council; its object was to propose laws: the second, consisting of two hundred and fifty members, all above forty years of age, was termed the council of elders; its object was to confirm laws. One third of the members was to be re-chosen every year. The executive government was vested in a DIRECTORY of five members. The directory was to be partially renewed by the election of a new member every year: none of the members who thus went out could be re-elected till after a lapse of five years. The directory was to be elected by the two councils, in the following manner: the council of five hundred was to make, by secret scrutiny, a list of ten persons; from which the senate, by secret scrutiny, was to select one; the judicial power was to reside in the judges of the department, chosen by the electoral assemblies; with a tribunal of appeal, chosen by the same, for the whole nation. The directors might invite the legislative body to take a subject into consideration, but could not propose

CHAP. LV. 1795.

Constitution of 1795: two councils, and an executive directory of five.

[a] Segur, vol. iii.

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CHAP. LV.

1795.

any topic of discussion, unless concerning peace and war. The directory was not invested with the power of assembling or proroguing the legislative bodies. This constitution showed, that the French politicians had now formed some idea of the utility of a control of estates. It was, however, extremely defective in its executive function, which was not endued with sufficient power to prevent the encroachment of the legislative bodies. The bestowal of the executive power upon five persons necessarily produced distraction and contest. It was impossible, in the nature of man, that five supreme rulers should long act with harmony. In its executorial efficiency, this system bore some resemblance to the constitution of 1789; in its two councils, it manifested a tendency to surpass the democracy royal.

French politicians now convinced that control of estates is necessary.

This year, the son of the late king, styled by the royalists Louis XVII., died in the Temple; and the king's brother, now representative of the house of Bourbon, assumed the title of Louis XVIII.

Death of the late king's son.

CHAP. LVI.

Effects of the French successes upon other powers. — The grand duke of Tuscany and the king of Sweden acknowledge the French republic. — Character and views of the king of Prussia. — After receiving a subsidy from England, he abandons the alliance — and concludes a peace with France. — Spain compelled to receive peace from France. — German princes. — Extensive dominion of the French republic. — Renewal of the war in La Vendée. — The French emigrants in England fancy and represent royalism to prevail in France — plan of co-operation with the royalists submitted to ministers — scheme adopted by them — expedition to Quiberon — disastrous issue of. — Requisition from Holland. — The French armies reduce the fortress of Luxemburg, and complete the conquest of Belgium. — Campaign upon the Rhine — indecisive. — Armistice of three months. — Naval operations. — Engagement of admiral Cornwallis with a much superior French force — by a stratagem he impels the enemy to fly. — Lord Bridport defeats the French fleet off L'Orient, and captures their largest ships. — Attempts of the French to recover their losses in the West Indies. — War in Jamaica with the Maroon negroes. — Admiral Hotham defeats the French off Corsica. — Admiral Elphinstone reduces the Cape of Good Hope. — Internal affairs of France. — Ambitious views of the leaders of the convention. — Efforts of Napoleone Bonaparte, a young Corsican officer, excite general admiration. — The moderates at length prevail.

CHAP. LVI.

1795. Effects of the French successes upon other powers.

THE successes of the French struck all Europe with astonishment; and it was evident, that the confederacy must be inefficient, without greater union of design, concert of counsels, and vigour of conduct. Some of the princes had avowed, that their object was the restoration of monarchy; but separate and private views had interfered with the successful prosecution of this purpose. It is probable, that every sovereign would have preferred,

CHAP. LVI. 1795.

in so very powerful a nation, ancient establishment to revolution. The effects and relations of the one were ascertained; of the other, could not be defined or comprehended. The French monarchy, when vigilantly watched, had been found compatible with the security of other countries: the principle of the new system was universal change. Hitherto, no potentate had acknowledged the French republic, which they either hoped or supposed must yield to so numerous and strong an alliance; but the extraordinary progress of the Gallic armies altered their opinions and policy: reasoning from operations and events, instead of combining them with their causes, several princes conceived, that since the efforts of the confederates, planned and directed as they were, had been unsuccessful, no exertions could avail. Convinced of the stability of the revolutionary scheme, sovereigns now began to deprecate the anger and court the friendship of such a mighty people.

The grand duke of Tuscany, and the king of Sweden, acknowledge the French republic.

To the great surprise of politicians, the emperor's brother, the grand duke of Tuscany, first acknowledged the French republic, concluded peace, sent the count de Carletti as minister to Paris; and, by a formal treaty, breaking his engagement with the coalition, promised in future to observe the strictest neutrality. One crowned head soon followed the example of this prince; the regent of Sweden, in the name of his nephew, sent the baron de Staal to Paris; and that ambassador appeared in the convention, and assured the French nation of the friendship which the court of Stockholm entertained for the republic.

Character and views of the king of Prussia.

THE king of Prussia, for two years, had been a very cold and inefficient ally: his jealousy of Austria had absorbed his apprehensions from France; and the participation of Polish spoils engaged him much more powerfully than the restoration of monarchy. Prematurely despairing

to

to be able to reinstate the heir of the Bourbons on the throne of France, he became disgusted with the war, and was not displeased that the hereditary rival of his family was weakened; and did not reflect, that the power which overwhelmed the Netherlands, and humbled Austria, was extending her means of eventually reducing Prussia. But examiners of conduct, who derive the measures and actions of princes, uniformly, from public policy, are apt to form very erroneous conclusions. Private passions and personal habits influence the counsels of kings. Frederic William was distinguished for his love of pleasure; and, though constitutionally brave, and occasionally active, a leading feature in his character was that indolence which is so usual a companion or follower of sensual indulgence.[a] Like his uncle, he was rapacious, but from very different views: the great Frederic sought and acquired territories and other possessions, for the aggrandisement and melioration of Prussia; his nephew appears to have desired the property of others, much more for the purposes of individual gratification. The extravagance that rarely fails to attend luxurious sensuality, had drained the coffers which the policy and œconomy of his predecessor had so very fully replenished. The plunder of Poland; and the sums which he received from England for making a promise that he did not intend to perform, removed his pecuniary difficulties, and created a new fund for pleasureable enjoyment: he could now revel in his seraglio without any apprehension of fiscal embarrassments. These circumstances and considerations, in the opinion of persons thoroughly acquainted with the disposition and private life of Frederic William, afforded an additional weight to

[a] This account is strongly supported by Segur; a man of penetration, who appears to have thoroughly comprehended the character of Frederic William. See vol. iii. chap. xiii.

CHAP. LVI. 1795.

the political reasons by which he was determined to separate himself from the alliance. "The king of Prussia (says Segur [b]), contented with his new acquisitions in Poland, and disgusted with the war, forgot, in the arms of his mistresses, his former objects, his recent defeats, the danger of the empire, the dispute of kings, and the interests of his sister the princess of Orange."

After receiving a subsidy from England, he abandons the alliance, and concludes a peace with France.

DURING the year 1794, a negociation was opened between France and Prussia; and, in April 1795, peace was concluded. The articles of this treaty were entirely favourable to France; such, indeed, was the temper, as well as the situation of the French at this time, that no other would have been admitted. The Prussian territories on the left bank of the Rhine were ceded to France, and those only on the right restored to Prussia. The regulations for the internal settlement of the countries which were thus ceded, were referred, for final discussion, to the period of a general peace between France and Germany. It was agreed, that a cessation of hostilities should take place, and continue in the north of Germany, which, henceforth, should be considered as neutral ground; and that those princes whose dominions lay on the right side of the Rhine, should be entitled to make proposals to France, and to be favourably treated; in behalf of whom, the king of Prussia should interpose his good offices. [c] Having thus accomplished, by policy, peace with Prussia, the next object of France was, to compel Spain to withdraw from the confederacy. The war of the republicans with that country had been uniformly successful. Their armies had surmounted the defiles of the Pyrennées, hovered over northern Spain, and threatened to penetrate into the heart of the country, and advance to Madrid. The king of Spain saw no

Spain compelled to receive peace from France.

[b] Vol. iii. p. 206.

[c] See Otridge's Annual Register, p. 62.

expedient

CHAP. LVI.

1795.

expedient to save himself from ruin, but the conclusion of peace. All resources had been exhausted; the nobility, the gentry, the clergy, the monastic orders, had all contributed; the orders of knighthood, which have large possessions in Spain, had lately made liberal donations to government, besides a tax, laid on their revenues, of eight per cent.[d] No class had been remiss in pecuniary assistance to the state; but want of personal spirit, or discontent at the measures pursued by the ministry, seemed to pervade the mass of the nation. In such a situation, the court of Madrid formed a resolution to withdraw from the confederacy. Peace was accordingly concluded, agreeably to the dictation of France. The conditions were, that France should restore to Spain all her conquests in that kingdom, and that Spain should cede to France all its part of the island of Hispaniola in the West Indies; together with all the artillery and military stores deposited in that colony. France also concluded peace with the greater number of the German princes. Holland was now formed into a democratic republic, on the model of France; and the power and wealth of these provinces was henceforward entirely at the disposal of the French republic. "Never (as the able[e] author of the Annual Register[f] observes) since the days of Charlemagne, had the empire of France extended over so many regions and people." A list of recent conquests was printed, and affixed to a tablet which was hung in the hall of the convention, and copies of it were sent to the armies, together with an enumeration of the victories by which these acquisitions were obtained. They consisted of the ten provinces of the Austrian

German princes.

Extensive dominion of the French republic.

[d] See Otridge's Annual Register, p. 60.

[e] Generally believed to be Dr. William Thomson. See life of that gentleman in Phillips's Public Characters, for 1803.

[f] Otridge's.

CHAP. LVI.

1795.

Netherlands; the seven united provinces; the bishoprics of Liege, Worms, and Spires; the electorate of Treves, Cologne, and Mentz; the duchy of Deux Ponts; the palatinate; the duchies of Juliers and Cleves. These accessions were all rich, fertile, and populous countries; abounding with men as zealous in their cause as the French themselves. On the south side of France, their conquests were, the duchy of Savoy, with the principalities of Nice and Monaco in Italy. The population of all these countries was estimated at thirteen millions; which, added to the twenty-four millions contained in France, constituted a mass of thirty-seven millions, inhabiting the centre of Europe, and capable, by that position alone, if united under one government, to defy the enmity of all their neighbours; to exercise an influence amounting almost to universal sovereignty.[g] So completely did the pressure of the confederacy drive the French nation to military enthusiasm; and such astonishing effects did that sentiment, operating upon the genius and energy of this extraordinary people, produce against an enemy who acted without a common principle or concerted union.

[g] The means by which they arrived at such an extent of power, the French exhibited in the following statement. In the space of seventeen months, they had won twenty-seven battles, and been victorious in one hundred and twenty actions of less note. They had taken one hundred and sixteen strong cities and fortified places; but what redounded chiefly to the reputation of the French, these successes had been obtained over the best-disciplined armies of Europe, elated with their past triumphs over warlike enemies; and commanded by generals of consummate experience, and the most dazzling reputation. Their own armies, in the commencement of the contest, consisted of officers and soldiers, few of whom had seen service, and their commanders were very far from eminent in their profession. With these disadvantages, they resolutely ventured to face the tremendous combination formed against them; and in less than twelve months, from acting on the defensive, they assaulted their enemies in every direction, and struck them every where with so much terror, that several of them were meditating a retreat from the field of action, and total secession from the confederacy, by uniting with which they had sustained so many losses. See Otridge's Annual Register, for 1795, p. 54.

A DIS-

CHAP. LVI.

1795. Renewal of the war in La Vendée.

A DISPOSITION to insurrection still prevailed in La Vendée; and at length broke out in new revolt. The objects of the French during this campaign were, entirely to crush intestine rebellion; and, in contending with their two remaining enemies, Britain and Austria, to act on the defensive against the naval efforts of England, and on the offensive against the military force of the emperor. Persevering in the policy which common sense dictates to the objects of a hostile and powerful confederacy, they uniformly sought to detach its members separately and successively from the combination; and where negociation would not avail, they employed force. Aware that against Austria their efforts would be much more effectual than against England, they directed their principal exertions towards their continental enemy. Luxemburg only remained in the possession of the Germans, on the left bank of the Rhine. The republicans proposed to reduce that fortress; afterwards, passing the Rhine, to make Germany the scene of war, and to press forward in Italy. Two armies were destined for the operations on the Rhine, respectively commanded by Pichegru and Jourdain. A considerable force was also sent against the insurgents, now consisting of the Vendéans and Chouans, and commanded by Charette. Large supplies of money sent from Britain, contributed to increase the number; and an expedition was undertaken from Britain, to co-operate with the French loyalists. Though this armament consisted chiefly of emigrants, the plan of operations was by no means conformable to their wishes and views. Certain emigrants represented to our ministers, that La Vendée and its neighbourhood were far from being the sole scenes of French loyalty: that in Guienne, Languedoc, Provence, Lyonnois, and Alsace, there were numerous bodies attached to monarchy. They proposed a grand scheme of connected co-

The French emigrants in England fancy and represent royalism to prevail in France.

CHAP. LVI.

1795.

operation[h], by an expedition in six divisions, in the maritime parts to consist chiefly of English, and in the inland of Austrian, invaders. The votaries of Mr. Burke's sentiments and ideas eagerly seconded this proposition; but that part of the ministry which, to use the political language of latter times, was rather anti-gallican than anti-jacobin, which was more intent on the annoyance of French power, than the dictation of French government, was averse to so expensive and weighty an undertaking. Less ardent for the restoration of monarchy, they did not apprehend, that the numbers and force of its friends was nearly so great as conceived in the sanguine hopes of the emigrants and Burkites. These observed, that if any attempt was made, it must be with a view to be effectual; that a small equipment would answer no useful purpose; a scanty force could not expect to prevail against the numerous hordes of republicans; and it would be better not to send any expedition, than to send a handful, which, instead of really aiding the loyalists, would only stimulate them to certain destruction. The majority of the cabinet, however, appear to have intended merely a diversion, to weaken the efforts of the republicans in other quarters: to the re-establishment of monarchy, the preparations were so totally inadequate, that it is morally certain they could not be designed for that purpose.

Plan of co-operation with the royalists submitted to ministers:

scheme adopted by them.

Expedition to Quiberon.

In the beginning of June, the expedition sailed to the southern coast of Britanny; and as the Vendéans possessed no sea-port to afford their friends a landing, the squadron proceeded to the bay of Quiberon. Here a body of about three thousand men landed on the 27th, and dispersed a small

[h] The proposed plan of operations, and the correspondence with which it was accompanied, was kindly communicated to me by an emigrant nobleman of high distinction, who bore a considerable part in the expedition.

number

number of republicans. They besieged and took a fort garrisoned by six hundred men, and prepared to march farther into the country. A considerable number joined the expedition, and a great quantity of arms had been sent; thence it was fondly expected, that an army would be formed in a short time, capable of facing the republican troops in the neighbourhood. Having increased to about twelve thousand men, they advanced up the country, and after gaining several skirmishes, attacking a large body of republican troops, they were obliged to retreat. Meanwhile, Hoche, having collected a numerous army, proceeded against the emigrant forces; a bloody battle ensued, and was followed by a decisive victory on the side of the republicans; scarcely three thousand escaped to their ships. The chiefs of the Chouans for several months carried on a desultory war, were at length overpowered by the republican armies, and punished as rebels against the government which they had so lately acknowledged. The unfortunate emigrants captured on this disastrous expedition were also treated as rebels, and suffered on the scaffold. Such was the melancholy termination of an expedition, from which no direct success could reasonably be expected. In employing, however, the force of the enemy, this undertaking was not without a considerable influence on the events of the campaign.

Disastrous issue of.

THOSE statesmen who supposed that by the continuance of the war the French would exhaust their resources, were in the event proved to be erroneous reasoners. War carried on with the energy which they exerted, and successful beyond all records of history, was to them an instrument of acquisition: in the spoils[1] of conquered countries they found their

The expectation of exhausting the French finances proves groundless. The revolutionists find new

[1] This conversion of the property of the conquered to the use of the conquerors has often been ascribed to jacobinism; but the slightest attention to history proves, that both the principle and practice are not new, but as old as the

CHAP. LVI.

1795.

their ways and means: Holland and Belgium supplied the treasury of France. The Austrian Netherlands were formally incorporated with the French republic; and to render this accession complete, they besieged Luxemburg. With this operation they opened the campaign; the garrison, though strong, yet being completely invested, and finding that no succours could approach, on the 17th of June capitulated. The French had only one place more to reduce, in order to compass that object which was to crown their military operations. This was, to make a conquest of the strong and important city of Mentz; by the acquisition of which they would regain the ancient boundary between Germany and Gaul, the river Rhine. But the situation of Mentz was extremely strong, and they found it necessary to convert the siege into a blockade. During the early part of the campaign, the French armies had been much less active than was expected from the successes of the former year. Their inaction, however, really arose from those very successes. Their victories, splendid and momentous as they were, had been earned by great profusion of lives; and though their armies were continually supplied with recruits, it required time to inure those to discipline. Though they might replace the numbers they were continually losing, they could not supply their places with an equal proportion of good soldiers. The French officers and commanders were fully aware of this deficiency, and, for this reason, were become less adventurous and enterprising. Besides, a considerable part of the republican force was employed against the revolters. The operations upon the Rhine were therefore, on the whole, indecisive, and unim-

resources in the conquered countries.

Requisition from Holland.

The French armies reduce the fortress of Luxemburg, and complete the conquest of Belgium.

Campaign upon the Rhine indecisive.

the records of war and plunder. One ingredient in their system differed from Grecian and Roman plunder, a spirit of proselytism. But that spirit was not peculiar to the French plunderers; the Spaniards in Mexico and Peru were almost as eager to convert as to rob, the unoffending Indians.

portant,

portant, compared with the events of the former year. It was not till the month of August, that Jourdain crossed the Rhine: he captured Dusseldorf, and compelled the Austrians to retreat. Pichegru with his army followed a few days after, and having reduced Manheim, occupied a position on the right bank, which intercepted the Austrian armies on the north and south of the Main, respectively commanded by generals Clairfait and Wurmser. A division of his army having attacked the Austrians with the usual impetuosity, put them to the route. But the spirit of plunder was so predominant among the French, that as soon as they had defeated this part of Wurmser's army, they dispersed on all sides in quest of pillage. The Austrian cavalry, informed of their disorder, returning, completely surprised and defeated the plunderers, and compelled them to make a precipitate retreat. Clairfait meanwhile advanced upon Jourdain's army, which had invested Mentz from the right bank of the Rhine, attacked and defeated its rear, and took a large quantity of cannon destined for the siege; and after successive victories, his adversary compelled the Austrians to re-cross the Rhine. Pichegru also found the same retrograde movement necessary: the two Austrian armies, now enabled to form a junction, crossed the Rhine, obliged the republicans to raise the siege of Mentz, and re-conquered the Palatinate and most of the countries between the Rhine and the Moselle. Alarmed at their progress, Jourdain collected all the troops that were stationed in the proximity of the Rhine, and by forced marches reached, in a short time, the scene of action. United with Pichegru, he had the good fortune to put a stop to the rapid career of the Austrians. The successes of the Germans encouraged them to project the siege of Luxemburg, but the vigorous resistance of the republicans prevented them from

CHAP. LVI. 1795.

CHAP. LVI.

1795.

from advancing so far. After various sharp conflicts, they were obliged to re-cross the Rhine. Meanwhile, on the right bank of the Rhine they were employed in besieging Manheim, which a strong garrison of French so vigorously defended, that it held out till the end of November, when it yielded to the Austrians. The campaign concluded by common consent of the hostile generals, who agreed to a suspension of arms for three months, which was ratified by the respective powers; and the armies of both parties withdrew into winter-quarters. The same languor marked the operations in Italy; the French maintained their former acquisitions, but made no farther progress. The continental campaign of 1795 was, indeed, on the whole inefficient. The French, however, had subdued the revolters, and acquired Luxemburg. The French, at sea, confined themselves to defensive efforts against our navy, and depredations on our trade.

Armistice of three months.

Naval operations.

THE naval operations of Britain were necessarily much less important than in the former year, against an enemy that would not face them with any considerable force. They were not, however, altogether deficient in brilliancy. Admiral Cornwallis had, this summer, been stationed on the west coast of France, to intercept the enemy's trade, and to correspond with La Vendée: on the 16th of June, having only five ships of the line, he met off Belleisle thirteen French ships of the line. Against a force so greatly superior he kept a running fight for the whole of the next day, without suffering the enemy to gain the smallest advantage. At length his repeating frigate, to deceive the French, threw out a signal that a large British squadron was in sight. This ingenious stratagem impelled the republicans to betake themselves to a precipitate flight. The Gallic squadron, six days after, fell in with lord Bridport, who defeated them,

Engagement of admiral Cornwallis with a much superior French force.

By a stratagem he impels the enemy to fly.

Lord Bridport defeats the French.

them, and took three of their largest ships, off port L'Orient. CHAP. LVI.

1795. fleet off L'Orient, and captures their largest ships.

In the West Indies, the French formed a project of recovering the islands which had been ceded to the English after former wars. To promote this purpose, they sent emissaries to St. Lucie, St. Vincents, Grenada, and Dominica, who had considerable success: St. Lucie was reduced through the efforts of the insurgents; and the three others with difficulty preserved. The French also reduced St. Eustatius, retook the island of Guadaloupe, and the fort of Tiberon in St. Domingo. In Jamaica, a war arose between the British and the Maroon Indians, a very hostile and dangerous tribe, scattered in the woods, and noted for robbery and murder. The militia and soldiers turning out, completely subdued these savages; and to trace the fugitives employed blood-hounds; the island was cleared of these marauders; the remainder of whom was transported to Upper Canada.

Attempt of the French to recover their losses in the West Indies.

War in Jamaica with the Maroon negroes.

In the Mediterranean, admiral Hotham defeated the French off Corsica; and on the coast of Africa, admiral Elphinstone captured the Cape of Good Hope and a Dutch fleet. From the time that Holland became a dependency of France, an order was issued for seizing all the Dutch ships in British ports; and also letters of marque and reprisal were granted against the Batavian republic. Such are the chief events of the third year of the war in which Great Britain was engaged against the French republic.

Admiral Hotham defeats the French off Corsica.

Admiral Elphinstone reduces the Cape of Good Hope.

The internal proceedings of the French republicans were at this time more active and energetic than the operations of their armies. Having formed the new constitution on the overthrow of the terrible system, the national convention was occupied in preparing for its practical commencement, and in endeavouring to destroy anarchy, did not lose sight of ambition. Before they surrendered their

Internal affairs of France.

CHAP. LVI.

1795. Ambitious views of the leaders of the convention.

their authority into the hands of the nation, they made provision for its renewal. They passed a decree, which enjoined the electoral bodies to chuse two-thirds of the deputies of the nation that were to be returned on this occasion, out of the members of the present convention; and ordained, that in default of an election of those two-thirds in the manner prescribed, the convention should supply the vacancies themselves. The constitution, and these decrees, were formally transmitted to the primary assemblies. These acts were by many considered as violations of the undoubted privileges of the people, and attempts to perpetuate their own power against the sense of their constituents. The Parisians declared, that henceforth the convention had forfeited all title to any farther obedience. The primary assemblies in the city having met by their own appointment, in defiance of the convention, insisted that they had chosen their electors, and that these being the direct representatives of the people, possessed a right to consult together as soon as they judged it necessary. The convention, in order to terrify the refractory, employed a military force to disperse this assembly of Parisians. The Parisians forbore at that time opposing the soldiers of the convention, but continued to inveigh against their designs. Both parties became inflamed with the greatest rage. After warm and violent contests of reasoning, they prepared to have recourse to force. On the 4th of October, the Parisian troops proceeded against the soldiers of their antagonists: a conflict taking place, was fought with the greatest courage and ardour, when the skill and enterprise of a young Corsican gave a decisive victory to the conventional troops. The officer in question was Napoleone Bonaparte, who on this the first opportunity of exerting his talents in military command, attracted the high admiration both of those for whom and against whom it was employed.

Efforts of Napoleone Bonaparte a young Corsican officer, excite general admiration.

employed. The numbers that fell did not exceed a thousand; and a great multitude was preparing from different quarters to join the troops of the Parisians, but were overawed by the success of the opposite party. The metropolis was subjected to the power of the convention, which made a very severe use of the victory, punished, without mercy, the Parisian insurgents; and in the apprehension of many of the more moderate republicans were about to revive the system of terror. The Jacobins began to regain an ascendancy in an assembly whose chief objects, like those of Robespierre, appeared to be uncontrolled dominion. They procured a commission to be appointed, consisting of five persons, who were empowered to consult together what measures were proper to be adopted in order to save the country. Such an arbitrary assumption of power alarmed all France: men were apprehensive that the days of Robespierre were about to be revived: but the circumstances were changed: the dread of foreign enemies being removed, the moderate republicans and constitutionalists were too numerous and powerful to submit to this new project of despotism. During the month of October, these contests were carried on with great warmth, and affairs appeared drawing to some important crisis; but they terminated favourably to the prospect of returning order. In the convention itself, the ablest men were among the moderates; and, though in a temporary minority, soon found means to prevail over a considerable number of the others, and at length to overbalance the violent and jacobinical junto. It was proposed, in the name of the nation, that the commission of five should instantly be suppressed, and that the constitution decreed by the acceptance of the people should take place, and the convention be dissolved on the day appointed; and the moderate party being now predominant, these propositions were

The moderates at length prevail.

CHAP. LVI.

1795.

were carried. The violent faction, aware of the odiousness of their conduct, and the decay of their power, endeavoured, by promoting or seconding popular acts, to regain the public favour. On the 26th of October, this celebrated convention dissolved itself, after having sitten upwards of three years; and, in governing France, produced effects more momentous to Europe than any which had taken place for several centuries. Their character, operations, and efficiency, were astonishing, and surpassed all the experience and records of history. Their chief collective characteristic was promptitude of intellectual and active powers, which discovered and called into effectual operation all the faculties and resources of the country; and made every species of inanimate and rational beings engines for compassing their ends. Exempt themselves from all moral and religious restraints, they destroyed or suppressed these principles in others, in order to ensure their instrumentality; in all qualities and means, they regarded merely efficacy; and in seeking their objects, they simply employed sagacity, invention, courage, resolution, and expedition. Genius, vigour of mind, indefatigable and rapid exertion, moving directly on to their end, and totally regardless of conscience, and of all the laws of God and man, making no account of human happiness or misery, may certainly do numberless acts in a private station, which must surprise all who, with equal power, have not thrown off the fetters of piety and virtue. Enormous however as their crimes might be, they were mixed with most extraordinary efforts, brilliant actions, and astonishing success against the enemies of their country. Never had a government greater obstacles to surmount; internal dissensions that rose to rebellion, extensive, powerful, and formidable; a confederacy of nations, two of which sent forth armies, that in numbers, courage, discipline, and military skill, were

Dissolution of the convention.

and character.

equal

equal to the Roman legions; and assisted by other states no less brave and hardy; with a kingdom which commanded the fountains of silver and of gold; had been once the rival of France herself, and of continental powers, was still the second in naval greatness: but, beyond all, an insular empire, which united the genius of Greece with the persevering valour and constancy of Rome; the opulence of Carthage and Persia; military prowess superior to any heroes of modern Europe[k], and a maritime force which far surpassed any related in the annals of mankind. Such a combination of resources and warriors never before had one state to oppose. Yet did the French convention, with the executive governments which it successively created, not only resist their immense efforts, by crushing internal revolt, and driving the enemy from their frontiers, but acquired accessions of territory more extensive than any which have been procured by conquest in modern Europe; whose fertility, industry, skill, riches, and the means of force, far surpassed any conquest achieved by the Romans during half a century of their most warlike history. If in compassing objects of such magnitude, they were guilty of many enormities; they possessed most uniformly, and signally exerted, one quality, without which the highest intellectual and moral excellencies avail little, in the conductors of momentous and dangerous wars, or any other arduous situations in active life: this was ENERGY[l], constant in object, rapid in exertion, and decisive in effect.

[k] If this should be thought an unfounded assertion, it must be by those who do not recollect the pitched battles between the British and any opponents, from Cressy to Alexandria: they never were beaten by equal, or nearly equal, troops, and very rarely by much superior numbers.

[l] This quality no observer of their conduct more explicitly and fully allows, than one author, who will never be accused of partiality in favour of the French revolutionists. See Burke on Regicide Peace; and his other writings concerning the French revolution, subsequent to the commencement of the war.

CHAP. LVII.

Britain. — Many who had approved of the war, tire of its continuance — are disappointed in its results — they conceive the advantages gained do not balance the loss incurred. — Scarcity and dearness of provisions. — Discontents. — Active endeavours of the innovating societies. — Multiplication of lecturers — who represent wars as ministerial jobs for plundering the people. — Frequency of seditious meetings. — Meetings of the corresponding society at Chalk-farm and Copenhagen-house. — Abuse of government. — Behaviour of the mob to the king in his way to and from parliament. — A bullet is shot into the king's coach. — Indignation of the public. — Proclamation. — Proceedings of Parliament. — Lord Grenville introduces a bill for the safety of his majesty's person — principle and details — arguments against it — for it. — Mr. Pitt's bill for preventing seditious meetings — objects and provisions of — arguments against it. — Mr. Fox reprobates the bills — exhibits the rights of the people to state their grievances — declares the bills intended to prevent the exercise of that right — and to shield ministers — he alleges, they subvert constitutional freedom. — Active efforts of him and his coadjutors both in and out of parliament. — Petitions. — Arguments for Mr. Pitt's bill — required by the circumstances of the times — somewhat modified, both pass into laws. — Impartial view of the new acts. — Restrictions on the freedom of the press. — Mr. Pitt apprehended to undervalue literary effort. — Majority of the literary class inimical to his administration. — Writers represent the series of his measures as more conducive to the power of the crown than the rights of the people. — State of ministerial popularity. — Ministers intimate his majesty's disposition to open a negotiation for peace — remarks of Mr. Fox on this declaration. — The conduct of the war is severely censured. — Supplies. — immense loan. — The taxes financially judicious, laid on the luxuries or conveniencies, and not the necessaries of life. — Able speech of earl Moira

on

on revenue.—Proposed remonstrance of opposition.—Dissolution of parliament.

THE war had been begun with the approbation, and even applause, of a very great majority of the British nation; and, during the first campaign, these sentiments continued to prevail: but the distresses of our army in Holland, and the apparent hopelessness of the contest at the expiration of the second, began to damp their eagerness. When a third campaign was concluded, many of the former promoters of war conceived, that the exertions of three years had not brought Britain any nearer the purpose of hostilities, than they were at its commencement, and now became tired of its continuance. Its expenses retrenching the comforts of life, came home to their feelings: like the bulk of mankind, judging from the event, they began to think that the war must have been wrong in the outset, which in its progress had so totally disappointed their expectation; at any rate, that it must be unwise in the continuance, when, in their apprehensions, it produced no benefit to balance the very heavy loss. In addition to the pressure of the war, a scarcity prevailed throughout the kingdom, and was woefully felt by the poorer sort, several of whom perished for want. The means of procuring sustenance were narrowed from various causes; but the discontented attributed this evil to the war; and the sufferers, through defect of employment, were ready enough to believe those who represented all the calamities that affected the nation, as proceeding chiefly, if not solely, from the hostilities. Multitudes, not only of the lower, but even the middling classes, very ardently desired peace, and began to cherish displeasure against ministers for not endeavouring to procure that blessing to the country. The members of the innovating societies were now extremely bold and active: the acquittals, at

CHAP. LVII.

1795.

Britain.—Many who had approved of the war, tire of its continuance:

are disappointed in its results:

they conceive the advantages gained do not balance the loss incurred.

Scarcity and dearness of provisions.

Discontents.

Active endeavours of the inno-

CHAP. LVII.

1795. vating societies.

Multiplication of lecturers,

who represent wars as ministerial jobs for plundering the people.

Frequency of seditious meetings.

at the trials for high treason, had swelled their exultation, and inspired their courage. They regarded the ministers as a junto, who had desired and plotted against them unjust death, without the power of perpetrating their designs. The most zealous democrats eagerly stimulated disaffection to government. Declamatory lecturers multiplied in the metropolis; the demagogues did not confine themselves to the topics which had been so often agitated in democratic societies, addressed to their own peculiar cast; but watched the tone of dissatisfaction beginning to be heard among persons who were well affected to the constitution of their country; and pointed their invectives and sarcasms, not merely against what they called the aristocratic principles and objects of the war, but what came much more home to the hearts of the people, its effects on their purses and means of livelihood. Lecturers[a], both stationary and itinerant, represented wars, and beyond them all, this war, as contrived by courts and ministers, to afford them pretexts for plundering the people, that they and their adherents might wallow in luxury; while the multitude, by whose hard earnings their profusion was supported, were stinted in the necessaries of life. These inflammatory arts operating on minds already sore with the pressure of the war and scarcity, brought many loyal and constitutional, though not considerate and discriminating men, into the vortex of discontent. A multiplicity of publications, periodical and occasional, strongly forwarded the same purposes; but the most pointed and effectually conducive to aversion against the present government, were the lectural and political conventicles which abounded in 1795, beyond all

[a] The author had the curiosity to go to hear some of the once noted John Thelwal's effusions, and also to read a certain production of his, styled The Tribune; he recollects, that the declamation mentioned in the text constituted the substance of both.

former

CHAP. LVII.

former periods; the private cabals of innovating associators, and the numerous public meetings to which these gave rise. The corresponding society again meet at Chalk-farm and other places, repeatedly in the course of the summer and autumn. A meeting, held at Copenhagen-house near Islington, of these conventions, was the most remarkable. The numbers that attended, either through zeal in the cause, or through curiosity, were computed at about fifty thousand. Some very daring addresses were made to the multitude; the conduct of ministers was arraigned in the most unqualified language; and a remonstrance to the king, on the necessity of peace, and a reform in parliament, was universally adopted. The chief abettors of the proceedings against government, were apprehended to be emissaries from France[b], who, though natives of Great Britain or Ireland, had thrown off all attachment to their country, and were become its most violent and rancorous enemies. The difficulty of detecting individuals connected with our foes, enabled them to assume the appearance of patriotism, and to delude with facility the majority of their hearers into a persuasion, that they spoke and acted from principle, and had no other intention than to expose abuses, and to induce the people to assert their rights.[c] The increasing frequency of those meetings, and the growing audaciousness of their directors, called for preventive measures.

1795. Meetings of the corresponding society at Chalk-farm and Copenhagen-house.

Abuse of government.

THE internal state of the kingdom, as well as its foreign relations, determined his majesty to call his parliament together at an earlier period than usual. It accordingly assembled on the 29th of October; a memorable day, on account of the events which it witnessed, and the consequences which ensued. A report had been spread, that an immense multitude of discontented people had agreed to take

Behaviour of the mob to the king, in his way to and from parliament.

[b] Annual Register, 1796, chap. i.
[c] Ibid.

CHAP. LVII. 1795.

this opportunity of manifesting their sentiments to the king in person. This of course excited the curiosity of the public, and the park was crowded in a manner unprecedented since his majesty's accession to the throne. In his way to the house of lords, through the park, his coach was surrounded on every side, by persons of all descriptions, demanding peace [d], and the dismission of Mr. Pitt. Some voices were even heard, exclaiming, "No king;" and stones were thrown at the state coach as it drew near to the horse-guards. In passing through palace-yard, one of the windows was broken, it was said, by a bullet discharged from an air-gun. These outrages were repeated on the king's return from parliament, and he narrowly escaped the fury of the populace in his way back from St. James's palace to Buckingham-house.

A bullet is shot into the king's coach.

Indignation of the public.

EVERY loyal and patriotic Briton felt with indignation the unmerited insult offered to his sovereign; and saw the necessity of restraining the rebellious spirit which such attempts indicated. A proclamation was published offering a large pecuniary reward for the discovery of the perpetrators; and also stating, that previously to the opening of parliament, a meeting had been held in the vicinity of the metropolis, where inflammatory speeches were made, and divers means used to sow discontent and excite seditious proceedings; requiring all magistrates and other well-affected subjects to exert themselves in preventing and suppressing all unlawful meetings, and the dissemination of seditious writings.

Proclamation.

Proceedings of Parliament.

A CONFERENCE was held between the two houses as soon as his majesty had withdrawn, and witnesses were examined in relation to the outrages that had

[d] First in a melancholy, but soon after a menacing tone. As his majesty's equipage turned towards the horse guards, the populace were become very insolent. His majesty displayed his usual magnanimity, and conversed with the lords without appearing to notice the disposition to riot. So far I was an eye-witness; but apprehending a tumult, I then left the park.

been

been committed. Their testimony was communicated to the commons, and both houses unanimously concurred in the addresses which were proposed. It was by no means deemed sufficient to investigate past guilt, and testify abhorrence of its treasonable enormity; it was necessary to prevent the recurrence of such dangerous wickedness.

Lord Grenville introduces a bill for the safety of his majesty's person.

To secure his majesty against future effects of so disloyal and unconstitutional a spirit, lord Grenville proposed a bill, intitled "An act for the safety and preservation of his majesty's person and government against treasonable and seditious practices and attempts." This law consisted of two parts; the first made a very momentous change, and extension of the crime of treason: it declared the commission, by deed, or by words spoken, written, or printed, or in any other open manner, or any act *tending* to the imprisonment, deposition, or death, of the king, or his heirs and successors, a conspiracy to levy war, in order to over-awe the parliament, and to effect a change of counsels, or to instigate any foreigner or stranger by force to invade any of the king's dominions, to be high treason, during the king's natural life, and till the end of the next session of parliament, after the demise of the crown. The second part extended the crime, and aggravated the punishment, of sedition: to excite dislike, and hatred to the person of the king, or to the persons of his heirs and successors, or to the government and constitution of this realm as by law established, by deed, by advised speech, or by words written or printed, was, for the first offence, rendered liable to the penalties incurred by the commission of a high misdemeanor, and, for the second, to the usual punishments prescribed by law, or to transportation for not more than seven years, at the discretion of the court. "The provisions (lord Grenville said) were conformable to the principles admitted in the

Principles and details.

CHAP. LVII. 1795.

acts of Elizabeth and Charles II., and were as similar as circumstances would permit. Difficulties having arisen in the construction of the laws relating to treason, already in force, the intent of this bill was to explain and fix the meaning of those laws. It would not prohibit any act allowed to be legal, but only provide a more suitable punishment according to the degree of criminality, than that which was ordained by the laws now in force; as in various cases, notwithstanding criminality was evidently proved, an opposite law had not been enacted. This bill was strongly opposed, though but by a very small number in the house of peers. Its most active impugners were the duke of Bedford and the earl of Lauderdale. These lords expressed the utmost horror of the daring outrage which had been committed against his majesty; but alleged, that the bill did not tend to procure more safety to the person of the sovereign than the laws that already existed; there was no sufficient proof that the outrages committed were connected with the meetings to which they were attributed; the present law was evidently an innovation in the constitution, and an abridgment of the liberty of the subject: it opened a dangerous latitude for constructive treason, one of the most pernicious instruments of tyrannical government. One of the strongest bulwarks of our freedom was the treason law of Edward III., by which, accurate definition of crime fenced the liberties and lives of English subjects against the capricious displeasure, or arbitrary designs, of a king or his ministers. This law had guarded former monarchs through barbarous ages and periods of turbulence and violence, and it was certainly sufficient to protect the king's life and safety in the present age of civilization and very general loyalty. But the proposed measure was neither calculated nor intended for the security of the king; it was designed to

Arguments against it;

deter

deter the people from exercising their constitutional right of stating grievances, lest thereby they might incur, from the vengeance of ministers, prosecutions for high treason, for acts, the *tendency* of which, by this new law, they might pretend to be treasonable. Ministers were aware that the eyes of the people were open to the folly and madness of their infatuated and ruinous war; and that their measures had excited general disapprobation and discontent: they unhinged the laws of the land, threw down the strongest props of our freedom, to frighten a distressed people from declaring their sufferings and requesting relief. The same motives dictated the second part of the bill, by which the most innocent acts were declared to be sedition, and the punishment was aggravated far beyond its proportion to the crime, and was totally inconsistent with the constitutional spirit of the English penal laws: our criminal code was to change its clearness, precision, accurate and enlightened justice, to accommodate either the wickedness, the imbecility, or infatuation of ministers. These were the arguments of the opponents of this law. CHAP. LVII. 1795.

MINISTERS, on the contrary, used the following arguments: laws must be adapted to changing circumstances; the ingenuity of human wickedness often devises modes of mischief, which lawgivers could not foresee in all their varieties; and hence, in human actions, instances of moral guilt and political injury, not provided against by law, occur in the history of depravity, as flagitious in motive, heinous in circumstances, and hurtful in effect, as any which are described in the penal code. Edward III.'s law had not been the only fence round the persons and rights of our kings; various statutes had been added as new occasions or circumstances of danger occurred: acts had been passed in the time of Charles II. as guards against the machinations of the republican party, because from them for it.

danger

CHAP. LVII. 1795.

danger was apprehended: at subsequent periods, treason had been extended to conspiracies in favour of the pretender; because, from such, danger was then apprehended. It was certainly true, that hitherto a conspiracy to overawe parliament, by whatever overt act carried on, had not been made treason, and the law in that respect was new. In point of fact, a conspiracy to overawe parliament had never till very recently occurred: the remedy and preventive had not been devised until the disease had appeared; but a conspiracy to control legislature was as inimical to the public welfare as the treasons already defined. The general principle was preserved, and the treason laws were extended to a new case which endangered the public safety.[e] The act imposed no restraint which loyalty and patriotism did not impose: its capital penalties were to be dreaded only by those who were conspiring to control the legislature, or to dethrone the king; and by ceasing to conspire, they avoided the penalties; and its subordinate enactments were dreadful only to the disseminators of sedition. Legal proceedings upon this law, as upon all others, were subject to an impartial investigation of a British jury. On these grounds, very forcibly urged by ministerial peers, especially lords Grenville and Loughborough, the bill, after undergoing some modifications from the discriminating wisdom of Thurlow, passed the house of peers, was carried to the commons, and underwent a similar discussion.

Mr. Pitt's bill for preventing seditious meetings;

MEANWHILE, a collateral bill was introduced by Mr. Pitt into the house of commons, to root up a principal cause of the crimes described in lord Grenville's law, by preventing seditious meetings. These assemblies, as we have said, had multiplied very rapidly under various forms and denominations; but most regularly and constantly, for

[e] See Parliamentary Debates of Nov. and Dec. 1795.

hearing

hearing inflammatory invectives against the government and constitution, under the name of political lectures. To prevent such mischievous conventicles, Mr. Pitt's bill proposed that all assemblies exceeding fifty in number, and not already recognised by law, if convened for addressing the king or parliament, with the view, or on the pretext, of considering grievances, or procuring an alteration in church or state, should be declared unlawful, and liable to dispersion by a magistrate, after reading a specific proclamation; unless the assembly were collected by a public advertisement, signed by seven resident householders, and a true copy of it, subscribed by them, were left with the publisher, who, under a penalty of fifty pounds, must deliver it to any justice of the peace by whom it should be demanded. It farther provided, that disobedience for more than one hour to the magistrate's order to disperse, should subject any individual, of a number above twelve, to the punishment of death; and even an assembly held by regular advertisement, in the same manner, and with the same risk to the disobedient, might be dispersed, if any measure subversive of the constitution, or tending to incite the people to hatred, or dislike, or contempt to the royal family, or of the parliament, were proposed. To prevent certain political lecturers from gaining a livelihood by preaching sedition, a house opened for any political discussion, without a licence, was to incur a penalty of a hundred pounds.

object and provisions of;

MR. FOX was the first that rose to impugn this bill. There was, he alleged, no evidence but the assertions of ministers, that the outrages, which he reprobated as much as any man, arose from the meetings described in the bill. But if the closest chain of connection could have been traced between certain meetings, and the attack upon our sovereign, the abuse did not justify the proscription of

arguments against it.

Mr. Fox reprobates the bill;

CHAP. LVII.

1795.

exhibits the rights of the people to state their grievances;

of the rights of the people. Public discussion on national subjects was not only legal, but the very life of the English constitution; and without these no liberty could subsist. The people had an unalienable right to deliberate on their grievances, and to demand redress from the legislature; but by this bill were forbidden to exercise those rights without the attendance of a magistrate, and previous notice to him of their intention. A PERSON APPOINTED BY GOVERNMENT was empowered to arrest any one present, whose words he might think proper to call sedition, and even to dissolve the meeting at his own pleasure. Behold the state of a free Englishman! before he can discuss any topic which involves his liberty, or his rights, he is to send to a magistrate, who is to attend the discussion; that magistrate cannot prevent the meeting, but he can prevent their speaking, because he can allege that what is said has a tendency to disturb the peace of the kingdom. Can a meeting, under such restrictions, be called a meeting of free people? Is it possible to make the people of this country believe that the plan is any thing but a total annihilation of their liberty? If the people's complaints were groundless, the less they were noticed the sooner they could cease, as false surmises would very soon be discovered and lose their effect; but, if well founded, the efforts made to repress them must terminate either in a base-minded submission of the people, or in a resistance fatal to their rulers as well as to themselves. Revolutions were not owing to popular meetings, but to the tyranny which was exerted to enslave men. The French revolution arose from ministerial oppressions, and the arbitrary proceedings of a despotic government, that held the people in continual dread, and silenced their very fears by the terror of the punishments suspended over those who

declares the bill intended to prevent the exercise of that right;

and to shield ministers:

1795.

dared to utter their sentiments. "Say then at once (exclaimed the orator), that a free constitution is no longer suitable to Britain: conduct yourselves openly as the senators of Denmark did: lay down your freedom, and acknowledge and accept despotism: but do not mock the understandings and feelings of mankind, by telling the world that you are free." These strictures, seconded by all the brilliancy, ingenuity, and acuteness of Sheridan, the constitutional and legal knowledge, and impressive eloquence of Erskine, being added to the efforts of opposition in the house of peers against the other bill, stirred up a great ferment in the country. Numerous petitions flocked in from every quarter, deprecating the bills as an annihilation of the liberties of the people. In promoting petitions, the lead was taken by the whig club, consisting of men in point of talents, rank, property, and character, equal to any association of the same number in the kingdom. On the other hand, addresses were presented in favour of the bills, which though not near so numerous, came from persons *aggregately* superior in rank and property to the petitioners.

he alleges they subvert constitutional freedom.

Active efforts of him and his coadjutors, both in and out of parliament.

Petitions.

THE arguments of the addressers and of the parliamentary supporters of Mr. Pitt's bill, were the wicked designs of those who directed the meetings which were proposed to be suppressed, and their destructive tendency if suffered to continue. The pretence of these meetings was to petition the legislature for rights withheld from the people; but the real motive was, to promulgate opinions that were inimical to government, and calculated to bring it into contempt. If the executive power were not invested with sufficient authority to control these meetings, they would finally endanger the existence of the state. It was the indubitable right of the people to pass their judgment upon ministers and their measures; and freely to express their sentiments

Arguments for Mr. Pitt's bill:

required by the circumstances of the times:

CHAP. LVII. 1795.

ments on all political subjects, as also to petition the different branches of the legislature; but these rights ought to be kept within their intended limits, and it was the duty of parliament to prevent them from becoming instrumental to the subversion of the established government. The rights of the people doubtless ought to be respected, but it was equally indispensable to obviate their abuse. A precise and acknowledged power was wanted in the magistrate to disperse such meetings as threatened disorder. The bill proposed to restrain no meetings, but those which were evidently calculated to incite ignorant and unwary men against the constitution. It permitted innocent and lawful assemblies, and only prohibited conventions hostile to the existing polity. These arguments convincing the majority in both houses, the bill was passed into a law: lord Grenville's bill also passed about the same time.[t]

somewhat modified, both pass into laws.

Impartial view of the new acts.

These acts tended greatly to shake the popularity of Mr. Pitt through the kingdom. However efficient they might be for remedying the specific evils that prevailed, yet even many friends of government thought they did much more than the necessity of the case justified. Persons unconnected with party admitted the expediency of extending the treason-laws to conspiracies for levying war against the sovereign and constitution; but disapproved of the vague and general description of this new species of treason, including in its overt acts whatever had a *tendency* to rebellion against the king, government, or legislature. This clause they considered as a deviation from the spirit of English laws: it opened, they said, a door for the arbitrary and oppressive constructions which characterise absolute and tyrannical systems; and was therefore contrary to the principles and objects of the British constitution.

Restrictions on the

The restrictions upon the press, imposed by the

[t] For the details of the debates, see Parliamentary Reports.

same

CHAP. LVII.

1795.

same act, by many well affected to government were deemed to admit also too much latitude of construction; to subject literary effort to the control of ministers, and to enchain the freedom of the press. It was allowed by every candid and impartial man, that the harangues and lectures of demagogues, in periodical and occasional conventicles, were extremely dangerous, and required to be prevented; but, on the other hand, it was asserted, that the laws in existence were sufficient for punishing whatever sedition could be proved to have been uttered; that the whole community ought not to be debarred from assembling, because incendiaries had, in certain assemblies, violated the laws. The right of discussing public measures belongs to every free-born Briton; its exercise promotes his sense of personal importance; the best nourisher of liberty and independence. Other Britons were not to be debarred from enjoying such privileges, because a foolish, virulent, or malignant lecturer, abused his exercise of the same right. The restriction tended to enervate the spirit of freedom, and thus to effect a great, general, and permanent evil, in order to remedy a partial and temporary evil. The most solid and effectual answer to these very forcible objections was, that the obnoxious laws were only intended to be temporary.

freedom of the press.

THE abilities of Mr. Pitt often manifested themselves in turning public opinion into the current which best suited his political views; but one engine he appears not to have estimated with his usual perspicacity: Mr. Pitt laid too little stress upon literary efficacy: while the press is free, literary power will produce great effects on public opinion. The minister was not deemed favourable to writers, as a class: perceiving that they had frequently done much mischief in France, he appeared to have drawn an inference too hasty, that they ought to be discouraged in England. The laws in question, and

Mr. Pitt apprehended to undervalue literary effort.

Majority of the literary

CHAP. LVII.

and other acts, tended to restrain the market for literary commodities, consequently to do an aggregate hurt to the profession. This effect literary men felt, and many of them strongly and efficiently expressed their feelings: habits of combination, analysis, comparison, and deduction of general principles, enabled them to view and estimate the character of the legislative measures of Mr. Pitt. In these they professed to discover, that the greater part of our new laws had a reference, either to public revenue, or to the security of the monarchical part of the constitution; and that few, of any extensive operation, are of the class that may be denominated popular. [g]

1795. class inimical to his administration.

Writers represent the series of his measures as more conducive to the power of the crown than the rights of the people.

THE violence of some partisans in their promotion of the bills, far transcended the limits which were observed by the minister himself, and added to the dislike with which many regarded those laws. While the minister justified the restriction as a necessary expedient, in a temporary case, without entrenching upon the whig principles on which the British constitution rests, high tories who supported him in defending the church and monarchy, promulgated their own peculiar doctrines; and manifesting a desire of degrading the just authority of a free people, revived exploded doctrines of passive obedience to the existing power. Ingenious men, adverse to ministers, did not fail to impute to the supreme leader these sentiments of too vehement and ardent subalterns; and an opinion now pervaded the lower classes, and infected many of the middling, and some of the higher, that Mr. Pitt was anxious not only to fortify, but extend the power of the crown, to weaken and contract the power of the people. Such an apprehension once entertained, affected their construction of his subsequent conduct; and from this time, his popularity diminished,

State of ministerial popularity.

[g] See Annual Register for 1796, p. 46.

though,

though, perhaps, his power increased. The financial ability of Mr. Pitt, during the whole of his administration, secured to him the support of the great capitalists, and the monied interest. In part of his ministry, the landed interest had been considerably divided, but through the alarms entertained from the French revolution, the greater number had joined his standard. At the beginning of the war, high rank and great property, with comparatively few exceptions, ranged themselves on the side of the minister. By much the greater proportion of the middling and lower ranks, having moderate or small property, joined the cause, which they, as well as the superior orders, conceived to protect their property, and other benefits which they held; but now many of the middling classes, and most of the lower rank, took the opposite side, while high rank and great opulence continued to favour ministers. In parliament, nearly the usual majorities supported the continuance of war, on the original necessity still remaining, and the expected exhaustion of the enemy's finances. Its opponents repeated their allegations of its original impolicy and folly; denied the probability of a decay of resources, arising from the ardent spirit of freedom; from the events of the last campaign, enforced their former assertions that the contest was hopeless; and adduced new reasons for peace, in the returning disposition to order in the French republicans, which was manifested since the overthrow of Robespierre and of the system of terrorism; they reminded ministers of the hopes held out at the conclusion of the former session in his majesty's speech, and insisted that the meliorated state therein mentioned was now arrived.

THOUGH ministers repeated their usual arguments for the vigorous prosecution of the war while it lasted, they had not dwelt, as in the former years, on the impracticability, from the internal state of

CHAP. LVII. 1795.

France, of its termination. His majesty's speech at the beginning of the session, delivered while the contest between the terrorists and the moderates in the national convention was at the most violent height, contained the following declaration: "The distraction and anarchy which have so long prevailed in that country, have led to a crisis, of which it is as yet impossible to foresee the issue, but which must, in all human probability, produce consequences highly important to the interests of Europe. Should this crisis terminate in any order of things compatible with the tranquillity of other countries, and affording a reasonable expectation of security and permanence in any treaty which might be concluded, the appearance of a disposition to negotiate for a general peace, on just and suitable terms, will not fail to be met, on my part, with an earnest desire to give it the fullest and speediest effect."[h] The moderates having at length prevailed, his majesty began to entertain hopes of the practicability of a peace with the government that now subsisted in France. Accordingly, on the 8th of December, he sent a message to the houses, stating, that the crisis depending at the commencement of the session had led to such an order of things in France, as would induce his majesty, conformably to the sentiments which he had already declared, to meet any disposition for negociation on the part of the enemy; and expressing his earnest desire to give it the fullest and speediest effect, and to conclude a general peace as soon as it could be accomplished justly and honourably for Britain and her allies. After this declaration the arguments for and against peace ceased to turn on the *competence* of the existing French government to conclude a treaty. Mr. Fox contended that there never existed an obstacle to negociation in any of

Ministers intimate his majesty's disposition to open a negociation for peace.

Remarks of Mr. Fox on this declaration.

[h] See State Papers for 1795, p. 138.

the

the successive governments of France; it was like every former discussion of peace and war with either French or other enemies, a mere question of justice and expediency, belonging to the contending nations in their relations to each other, without any connection with the internal government of either. He rejoiced, however, that ministers professed to return to a disposition from which they ought never to have departed, and to which he had so often exhorted them in vain. Motions were afterwards made in the houses of parliament, for addresses to the king, requesting him to communicate to the executive government in France, his readiness to embrace an opportunity of coinciding with them in mutual endeavours for the re-establishment of peace.[k] These propositions were resisted by ministers: the conduct of a negociation belonged solely to the executive government; if ministers were deemed unworthy of such a trust, their opponents ought to petition for their removal; but while they continued in office, they alone could be the proper agents in such a transaction; they ought, on this principle, to act unitedly, not only among themselves, but with the allies of this country, to whom no cause should be given to suspect us of duplicity, or of a separate policy. If they remained entire, so powerful a confederacy could not, in the nature of things, fail, by perseverance and unanimity, to obtain an advantageous peace; but this desirable object depended on the moderation of the enemy. All had been done which honour and interest admitted, to bring France to this issue; but neither honour nor interest would be sacrificed. On these grounds the several[l] motions

CHAP. LVII.

1795.

1796.

[i] See Parliamentary Reports, Dec. 8. 1795.

[k] Motion of Mr. Grey, 15th Feb. 1796.

[l] By Mr. Fox and lord Guildford, on the 10th of May, in their respective houses.

CHAP. LVII.

1796. The conduct of the war is severely censured.

were negatived. The conduct of the war underwent severe animadversions: it was asserted by opposition, that the miscarriages of the campaign had manifested a total want of concert in our plans; that our military measures were a mere succession of detached experiments, directed to no uniform and consistent object; that they shewed a total want of the wisdom and energy, the combination of which was necessary to a war minister. The expedition to Quiberon was reprobated with peculiar severity; ministers were also strongly reprehended for their inadvertence, in not furnishing the troops sent to the West Indies with a sufficient quantity of medical stores, and for maintaining at present, without necessity, no less than a thousand staff officers. The number to which the fencible cavalry amounted, were attributed to the ministerial plan of keeping the people in subjection and dread; the regular cavalry was equal to every just and proper purpose, without loading the public with so much additional expence. In the preceding summer, a great addition had been made to the barracks before erected, and many regiments had been raised, and placed under the command of gentlemen, or noblemen, who had never been in the army. Opposition reprobated these measures, as tending to increase the influence of the crown by lucrative jobs and appointments; the more dangerous, because not a few of these commanders were members of parliament; the barrack system, by separating soldiers from the people, tended to destroy that coincidence of sentiment, without which soldiers would be the mere tools of the executive power, instead of being defenders of the community.[m] Ministers defended the expedition of

[m] These arguments were urged in repeated motions; especially a proposition by Mr. Grey, on the state of the nation, on the 10th of March; by Mr. Sheridan, for inquiring into the mortality in the West Indies, on the 21st of April;

of Quiberon, as the result of the best information and reasoning that could be derived from officers of experienced skill, and thoroughly acquainted with the country. In the West Indies, an ample supply of medicinal stores had been sent, but had fallen into the hands of the enemy; they were, however, repairing with all possible expedition. The staff officers were numerous, but not more than were required by the manifold exigencies of the service. The system of barracks was neither new nor unconstutional, while the war lasted, it was necessary to hold men in readiness, and the present was the most convenient mode for that purpose; they also prevented the inconvenience, trouble, and expence accruing to subjects from quartering soldiers. Men of opulence and distinction had been preferred to commands, in their respective counties, as more able to procure levies than others; besides, in a war of which so important an object was the defence of rank and property, it was consistent and prudent to employ persons who had so much at stake.

Supplies.

THE national expenditure was also a subject of discussion. Besides the annual income of the country, two loans were this year required; the first, including a vote of credit, consisted of twenty millions and a half; and the second of seven millions and a half. So enormous a sum added to the preceding debts incurred since the war, made the additional amount of the national incumbrances near eighty millions in three years. The censurers of the war viewing this immense burden, asked its supporters what benefit would accrue to the country to balance the loss? To what end were we carrying on a contest of such unparalleled cost? The minister had asserted, we were warring for security and indemnity; how was a repetition of disaster to

Immense loan.

April; and by Mr. Grey, for an impeachment of his majesty's ministers, on the 24th of April. See Parliamentary Reports.

CHAP. LVII. 1796.

strengthen security? Failing in our enterprises, whence were we to derive our compensation? Ministers contended that the war had been undertaken for the most important objects, that the greatest and most vigorous preparations were necessary, not only for defending Britain if the war should continue, but for inclining the enemy to peace. Our commercial situation, notwithstanding the war, was more prosperous than at any antecedent period. The average of exports, during the three last years of peace, the most flourishing ever known in this country, was twenty-two millions five hundred and eighty-five thousand pounds; and the same average for the last three years of war was twenty-four millions four hundred and fifty-three thousand. The expenditure of war was doubtless immense; but the exertions to which it was applied were of no less magnitude. Never was the energy of this country so astonishingly displayed, nor its resources so wonderfully proved; our fleets and our armies were in a far superior condition, both as to numbers and equipment, to those which were maintained in the American war. Besides, the decreased value of money made a very great real difference in sums nominally the same; and compared with the importance of the object, and the magnitude of our efforts, the amount was not excessive.

The taxes financially judicious; laid on the luxuries and conveniencies, and not the necessaries, of life.

EVERY impartial observer, reviewing the taxes both of the present and the former years of the war, admitted, that if politically necessary, they were financially judicious. The principal subjects were wines, spirits, tea, coffee, silk, fruit, tobacco, hair-powder, and various other articles of luxury, without any encroachment upon the necessaries of life. Opposition, however, contested the financial expediency of the imposts. In the house of peers, the earl of Moira exhibited a very able discussion upon the revenue, the taxes, the imports and exports,

Able speech of earl Moira on revenue.

ports, and the other financial circumstances of the nation, at the close of the American war, and at the present period. The inferences from the arguments and statements produced by the respective parties were extremely opposite. The one represented the situation of this country as replete with the most arduous difficulties, and almost verging to ruin; and the other described it as full of opulence and resources of every denomination; and able, with proper management, to encounter and surmount every obstacle, and to flourish with more lustre than ever. Opposition, not understanding that ministers were taking any steps for the attainment of peace, charged them with insincerity; and in both houses proposed a very strong address in the nature of a remonstrance, professing to exhibit the leading features, principles, and character of ministerial conduct from the beginning of the war; and attempting to prove that they had transgressed every rule of prudence and policy; and praying his majesty to adopt maxims more suitable to the public exigencies. On a review (this remonstrance set forth) of so many instances of gross and flagrant misconduct, proceeding from the same pernicious principles, and directed with incorrigible obstinacy to the same mischievous ends, we deem ourselves bound in duty to your majesty and to our constituents, to declare that we see no rational hope of redeeming the affairs of the kingdom, but by the adoption of a system radically and fundamentally different from that which has produced our present calamities; unless your majesty's ministers shall, from a real conviction of past errors, appear inclined to regulate their conduct upon such a system, we can neither give any credit to the sincerity of their professions of a wish for peace, nor repose any confidence in them for conducting a negociation to a prosperous issue:

Proposed remonstrance,

CHAP. LVII.

1796.

the proposed address was combated on the usual grounds, and negatived by a very great majority.

is negatived.

Mr. Wilberforce, this year, made a new motion for the abolition of the slave trade, which, though supported by Messrs. Pitt and Fox, was rejected.

Dissolution of parliament.

On the 19th of May, parliament was prorogued, and a few days after it was dissolved.

CHAP. LVIII.

Views of the belligerent powers. — French decree for the irrevocable annexation of Belgium to the republic. — Hopes of Britain and of Austria. — The governments of the contending countries are little disposed to peace — the people on both sides desire to terminate the evils of war — the respective governments profess a pacific disposition — indirect overtures of Britain to France — the answer of the French for the present prevents negociation. — Belligerent policy of the French government. — French objects of the campaign — La Vendée, Germany, and Italy. — The reduction of La Vendée. — Tendency of revolution to call forth abilities. — Numbers of able commanders who sprang up among the French. — This year displays an extraordinary general. — Bonaparte appointed to command the French army in Italy. — Numerous and well-disciplined army of the emperor — assisted by the Italian princes. — Inferior force of the French. — Bonaparte commands the minds of his soldiers — he attacks and defeats the Austrians — repeated victories. — Bonaparte separates the Austrian and Piedmontese armies. — By a victory at Mondovi he compels the king of Sardinia to yield at discretion — who receives peace from his dictation. — Bonaparte surmounts the natural ramparts of Italy — wise measures to keep up the spirit of his troops. — Battle at the bridge of Lodi — signal exploit and victory of Bonaparte — he imitates the Romans in their rapacity as well as valour — but mingles conciliatory policy, especially towards the populace. — Conspiracies at the instance of the nobles and clergy — are disconcerted — and punished. — Bonaparte gains to his interest the men of genius and literature — and endeavours to bring every kind of talent into efficient action — result of his political efforts — he resumes military operations — marches from Italy towards Germany. — Wurmser takes the field with a fresh army of Austrians — is repulsed by the French. — Bonaparte invests Mantua — Wurmser approaches to its relief. — Bonaparte is surrounded at Lonado — he extricates himself by a stratagem, and induces a much superior army to surrender. —

Successive

Successive victories of Bonaparte — decisive victory at Arcola — capture of Mantua. — Commotions at Rome — conduct of the papal government — the pope attempts to make war against Bonaparte — the French general makes conciliatory overtures — reply of the pope — Bonaparte invades the Roman territories, and compels the pontiff to sue for a peace. — Amount of the French acquisitions in Italy in this campaign. — Political administration of Bonaparte. — Germany invaded by Jourdain and Moreau. — The archduke Charles — successive battles of, with Jourdain. — Danger of the empire — is warded off by the valour of the archduke — who compels Jourdain to evacuat eGermany. — Progress and situation of Moreau — masterly and successful retreat in the face of the German host. — Britain continues signally successful where she fights alone — retakes St. Lucie — quells insurrections in the other islands — captures seven Dutch ships of the line in Saldanna bay — reduces Ceylon and other Dutch settlements in the East — judges it expedient to relinquish Corsica. — Ineffectual attempts of the French upon Ireland. — Internal events — birth of a princess, heir to the prince of Wales. — General election — the least contested of any in the eighteenth century. — British government proposes to send an ambassador to Paris to negociate a peace. — France agrees to receive a British ambassador.

CHAP. LVIII.

1796. Views of the belligerent powers.

DURING the last campaign, the efforts of the French republicans had been much less successful, than from the victories and acquirements of the former year, together with the diminution of the confederacy, they had probable grounds for expecting: they were anxious to recover their superiority of military prowess, and with this view the directory made vigorous preparations to place the numerous armies of the republic on the most formidable footing. It was proposed to the legislature, and solemnly decreed, to annex their acquisitions in the Low Countries, and on the left side of the Rhine, irrevocably to the dominions of the republic. In the relative circumstances of the belligerent powers, a resolution of this nature precluded all

French decree for the irrevocable annexation of Belgium to the republic.

ideas

ideas of peace. The retention of those fertile and spacious provinces could not be submitted to, without an evident alteration of the political system of Europe, of which France would possess a control that would perpetually disturb the peace, if not endanger the safety, of all her neighbours. The inhabitants of Belgium, so long habituated to the sway of the Austrian princes, which, though occasionally oppressive, had been generally mild, still retained a willingness to return to their obedience, provided they could be secured in the enjoyment of their ancient customs and liberties. Sensible of this disposition, and exaggerating the success of the last campaign, the Austrian cabinet preserved the hope of recovering those fertile provinces. The British ministers were no less bent on the restoration of the Austrian Netherlands to their former owner. The accession of such immense and valuable territories to France in so close a proximity, seriously alarmed all men who reflected on the power, energy, and enterprise, of the French; and their violent resentment against this country. The government of Britain and her ally on the one hand, and of the French on the other, were, from this contention of adverse purposes, little inclined to peace; but the people in all the conflicting countries were anxiously desirous to be relieved from a war, the pressing evils of which they immediately felt; and the eventual advantages of which, if any, they either did not comprehend, or did not think sufficient to counterbalance the present burdens and losses. The belligerent governments, therefore, to gratify the people, found it expedient to assume the appearance of a pacific disposition; in which, from the subsequent [a] acknowledgments of our ministers, it is certain, and from the conduct of the French directors, it is very probable, that

Hopes of Britain and of Austria.

The governments of the contending countries are little disposed to peace.

The people on both sides desire to terminate the evils of war.

The respective governments profess a pacific disposition.

[a] See Mr. Pitt's speech on the first consul's proposals for peace in January, 1800.

they

CHAP. LVIII. 1796.

they were respectively inimical to peace. The French, meanwhile, were employing their usual ingenuity and address, in endeavouring to detach various members from the hostile confederacy, and Basle, a considerable city in Switzerland, was, on account of its neutral state and central position, the scene of their negociations. There the celebrated M. Barthelemi had concluded the treaty with Prussia, and was still engaged in diplomatic agency. Mr. Wickham, the British ambassador to the Swiss cantons, was instructed to apply to this gentleman, to sound the disposition of the French government, and to learn whether the directory were desirous to negociate with Britain and her allies, on moderate and honourable conditions, and would agree to the meeting of a congress for this purpose, and specify the terms on which it would treat, or point out any other method of procedure.

Indirect overtures of Britain to France.

The answer of the French for the present prevents negociation.

The answer received from M. Barthelemi, in the name of the directory, was, that it felt the sincerest desire to terminate the war on such conditions as France could reasonably accept, and which were specified in the answer; but one of these positively insisted on the retention of the Austrian dominions in the Low Countries, and assigned as a reason, their formal annexation to the republic by a constitutional decree that could not be revoked. This reply, expressing a decided resolution not to part with their acquisitions, displayed, in the opinion of the British ministers, a disposition so arrogant, that the negociation was suspended, and both parties proceeded to open the campaign.

THE French directory had now to contend with two potent enemies; the one of which surpassed most nations, but was inferior to France in land forces; the other far exceeded all nations, and even France herself, in maritime strength. With a policy much more profound than that which dictated the belligerent measures of the Bourbon princes,

Belligerent policy of the French government.

princes, the revolutionary rulers employed their exertions in the scenes of probable victory, instead of probable defeat: their armies, still superior to their valiant and disciplined opponents, occupied their principal attention, and their fleets, subjects of only secondary consideration, did not divert, as in former wars, to hopeless efforts a grand portion of their resources.

French objects of the campaign: La Vendée Germany, and Italy.

THE directory had three objects in contemplation: an invasion of Germany, another of Italy, and the complete reduction of domestic insurgents. The subjugation of La Vendée was indispensably necessary, before they could carry into execution their grand project against the Austrian dominions. The connection of the insurgents with the most formidable and dangerous rivals of France—the English, made it evident, that while the royal party subsisted unsubdued, it would probably, as it had done in the preceding year, throw such embarrassments in the military operations intended against foreign enemies, as would clog and impede the plans that were proposed. The discomfiture of the expedition from England, and the severe punishment of its abettors, had frightened the Vendéans. The leaders of the insurrection, however, found means to excite the people to a new revolt, attended with all the disorders usual in civil war. Charette and Stoflet published a manifesto, charging the republicans with breach of faith, and the most outrageous cruelty. In consequence of the revolutionary enormities, they declared themselves determined to take up arms again, and never to lay them down till the heir of the crown was restored, and the catholic religion re-established.[b] They held out every motive that had formerly been prevalent; attachment to their religion, love of their king, and hatred to the present innovations. Many

[b] Otridge's Annual Register, 1796.

were

CHAP. LVIII. 1796.

were induced accordingly to enlist again under their banners: but the greater part remained quite in their habitations, and the flower of the insurgents was not, as before, composed of the Vendéans, but of the mixed and numerous mass of the inhabitants of the several provinces of Britanny, Poitou, Maine, Anjou, and others which are situated on the banks of the Loire.[c] Hostilities raged with great fury during the winter; the republican government sent general Hoche early in the season against the insurgents: Charette was completely defeated, and his followers dispersed. The directory, wishing to adhere to the moderate measures which from the begining of their power they professed to adopt, enjoined their commanders and troops to employ conciliation as much as possible, and to abstain from all unnecessary severity. An amnesty of the past was accordingly published to all who should return to their duty; every district which surrendered its arms, and punctually conformed to the conditions prescribed, was immediately placed under the protection of the laws. Conciliatory policy, the wisest that can be adopted in intestine insurrections for terminating revolt already broken by successful force, proved ultimately effectual, and the rebellion was crushed. The government was now at liberty to direct the whole force of its efforts against Germany and Italy.

The reduction of La Vendée.

As the directors by personal efforts had reached the pinnacle of executive power, by success only could they hope to retain eminence. The insurance of success depended on the choice of instruments in the various departments of public service. In revolutionary governments which have levelled pre-existing establishments, promotion according to qualification, exclusively, is much more practicable, than in old and regular constitutions, which contain

c See Otridge's Annual Register for 1796, p. 82.

fixed

fixed gradations of rank and of orders. In the very best systems of polity that have been long settled, splendid ancestry, high rank, extensive property, or political connections, attach to certain families or individuals such an authority, that few ministers can avoid employing them in services for which their talents and characters by no means render them the fittest that could be chosen. A British minister, even if he should be desirous, would find it difficult to fill either military or political departments with the most efficacious men that could be found, without respect to rank, situation, and influence: even Mr. secretary Pitt, who carried the principle of employing men according to their respective abilities farther than any other English minister, in *politics* was obliged to admit the co-operation of certain men of rank and influence, whom his penetrating judgment would assuredly never have selected, on account of their personal qualities, as his associates in great designs. Forming his naval and military appointments without control, and chusing that class of executive servants on the simple principle of instrumentality, he obtained such brilliant successes both by sea and land. The French government, totally unfettered from prescription and authority[d], possessed without control the power that might be instrumental to success. Thence sprang so many able generals, whose genius, without neglecting the lessons of experience, disdained mere precedent, and invented new combinations of defence and attack, new modes of advance and retreat, to suit the circumstances of their situation.

1796. Tendency of revolution to call forth abilities.

Numbers of able commanders who sprang up among the French.

[d] Although it be a fact, that in revolutions abilities generally rise to a greater elevation than in established governments, yet it does not follow that it is a beneficial fact, as the able heads which are thus raised, commonly attain and preserve their power by the most mischievous qualities of the heart: such possessors of supremacy, far beyond their original rank and station, have usually proved unprincipled adventurers, who regarded neither justice, patriotism, nor the good of mankind, in comparison with their own ambition. — For instance, Cæsar, Cromwell, &c.

CHAP. LVIII.

1796. This year displays an extraordinary general.

THE campaign 1796 exhibited a young leader, who, in prowess, energy, and exploits, equalled any commander that the late war discovered and exercised: this was Napoleone Bonaparte, a native of Corsica, born about 1769. The youth possessed talents and qualities which peculiarly fitted him for attaining distinction in the ferment of revolution and the dangers of war. To a head sagacious and inventive, instantaneous in comprehension, and rapid in efforts, he joined a heart that was ardent, resolute, intrepid, and courageous; with an aspiring ambition, and an impetuous temper. One prominent feature of his character was determined perseverance in his purposes, and he would scruple no sacrifice to compass his ends. His object being to exalt himself, he joined the parties that were successively paramount; was a monarchist, constitutionalist, and terrorist. To Robespierre he adhered as long as fortune adhered; and with no less eagerness devoted himself to that monster's successors, and became a prime favourite with Lepaux: he was at equal pains to win the attachment of the troops. The directors discerned the vigorous and fertile genius of Bonaparte, knew his military ardour and energy, and his popularity among the soldiers. Such qualifications they conceived to over-balance his youth and limited experience; and they conferred on him the command of the army of Italy.

Bonaparte.

Appointed to command the French army in Italy.

THE emperor was joined by the king of Sardinia, the king of Naples, and the pope; and during the three preceding years, the French had in vain attempted to pierce through Piedmont into the interior parts of Italy. The immense barriers of mountains, which divide that country from Savoy, seemed to oppose an insurmountable obstacle to their progress. The republicans were indeed in possession of the coast from Nice to Genoa; but the passes in Lombardy were guarded with such care that no apprehension was entertained but by the

CHAP. LVIII.

court of Turin with respect to the future.[e] The emperor's forces amounted to eighty thousand well-disciplined men, commanded by excellent generals and able officers, and provided with every species of warlike necessaries. The king of Sardinia's army was sixty thousand strong, exclusive of militia: the pope and the king of Naples were occupied in embodying as many troops as their circumstances would permit, and the latter had dispatched two or three thousand horse to serve in the imperial army. Such obstacles opposed by nature, joined to so great a hostile army, only served to rouse the genius and spirit of Bonaparte. The whole force which the French could afford to this general, before La Vendée was reduced, did not exceed fifty thousand, not so well supplied as the much more numerous host of his veteran adversaries; with this army he took the field in the month of April. According to the common calculation of probabilities, in a war stimulated by the usual principles of enmity among sovereigns, the project of forcing the passes of the Italian mountains against such numerous and powerful foes, would have been extravagant and romantic. A tactician of mere experience[f], without penetration and invention, reasoning very fairly from *his* knowledge and views, would have concluded, that such an attempt must terminate in disappointment and disaster: but Bonaparte, penetrating into the French mind and springs of action, saw that the republicans were animated by an enthusiasm which would overbear all the regular but phlegmatic valour of the Germans. The Austrian army was commanded by general Beaulieu, an officer of great military experience, though in the Netherlands, as we have seen, he had been over-

1796. Numerous and well-disciplined army of the emperor, assisted by the Italian princes.

Inferior force of the French.

Bonaparte commands the minds of his soldiers.

[e] See Belsham's History, vol. v. p. 419.

[f] A very common objection against the military efforts of Bonaparte was, that they deviated from the established practice; and with those *judges* who in MEANS regard *usage* more than ADAPTATION TO ENDS, the objection must have weight.

CHAP. LVIII. 1796.

powered by the republicans. The imperialists being inspirited with the successes of their countrymen in the preceding year, and his troops being so numerous, he did not hesitate to act on the offensive; and, in the beginning of April, he advanced towards the French lines. On the 9th, he attacked an outpost with success; and, on the 11th, he attempted the other intrenchments.[s]. Bonaparte, by a rapid movement, turning the enemy's flank and rear, assailed them with impetuous vigour at a place called Montenotta, and gained a complete victory, having killed fifteen hundred men, and taken two thousand prisoners. Like Cæsar, Bonaparte was not only energetic, but rapid in energy: eager to improve his victory, he pursued the Austrians, who had retreated to a strong situation on an eminence called Millesimo; but general Angereau having forced the avenues to their position, the imperialists retired to the ruins of an old castle, and having fortified themselves, they recovered from the disorder into which they had been thrown by their late defeat. Conceiving his forces, after this respite, still superior to the republicans, Beaulieu again, on the 16th of April, attacked the French army. The troops on both sides were animated with extraordinary courage, the Austrians regarding with indignation their route at Montenotta, which they imputed to a stratagem, and not to the prowess of the enemy, were eager to efface the remembrance of the disaster. The French, elated with their victory, which had so auspiciously commenced the campaign, and operated so powerfully on their susceptible and impetuous minds, glowed with an ardent desire of overwhelming the superior numbers of their enemies. The Austrian charge was extremely vigorous, but

He attacks and defeats the Austrians.

Repeated victories.

[s] See Campaigns of Bonaparte for the military details both of this and succeeding actions; and also the Austrian accounts, as inserted in our gazettes of 1796.

was

CHAP. LVIII. 1796.

was withstood with an intrepidity and strength that could not be moved. While the imperialists were bending the whole force of their attack on the front of the enemy's centre, Bonaparte, with the most dexterous celerity, moved his wings round the right and left of the Germans, and in a short time assailed them in both flanks and rear. Thus unexpectedly surrounded, the imperialists sustained a dreadful defeat, two thousand were slain in the field, and eight thousand made prisoners. Among the killed were some officers of high distinction; and of the taken, one was a general, and near thirty colonels, besides inferior officers. Between twenty and thirty cannon fell into the hands of the French, with fifteen standards, and an immense quantity of stores and field equipage. Beaulieu, not disheartened by these disasters, collected as many as possible of his scattered soldiers, and the following day attacked the French, who did not expect an assault from troops they had just vanquished, and were indulging themselves in that repose which comes so grateful after the successful completion of arduous labour. The onset at first disconcerted the republicans, thus relaxed in their vigilance; but they soon rallied. Bonaparte, agreeably to his plan already twice successful, formed a large body in front of the enemy, to occupy their attention, while another division, going round, should charge them in flank. The celerity of the French movements soon obliged the enemy to act on the defensive. Having long made a resolute stand, the Austrians were compelled to give ground, and leave the field to the French, with the loss of near two thousand men, of whom about fifteen hundred were made prisoners. On the side of the French, great numbers also fell, and among these, Caussa, one of their best officers. In the course of these battles, Bonaparte effected a separation between

Bonaparte separates the Aus-

CHAP. LVIII.

1796.

between the Austrian and Piedmontese armies, and now directed his efforts against the troops of the king of Sardinia. On the 22d of April, he came up with the Italians at Mondovi, and attacked them, though strongly entrenched: the Piedmontese made a very vigorous resistance, but totally unavailing against the republican impetuosity and force. The royal army was completely routed, and the fate of the king's dominions decided by the defeat.[h] His Sardinian majesty saw that his only means of escape from utter ruin was to accept peace from the dictation of the victorious general. He was compelled to cede Savoy and Nice; to withdraw from the coalition; to apologise for his conduct towards the French republic; and, retaining the name of king, to become a mere dependent on France. Thus Bonaparte, in the first month of his command, effected what his predecessors had for three years, without any misconduct, attempted in vain. He had stormed the ramparts of Italy, and, like Hannibal[i], had its delighful vales and fertile fields lying within his grasp. Their astonishing successes could not fail to inspire the French armies with the highest degree of exulting joy; nor did their commander forget to improve the sentiments of self-applause and confidence manifested by them, into that disposition of mind which would lead them on to those farther exploits that he had in contemplation. He issued an address, concisely and forcibly recapitulating the achievements which they had already performed, and the objects which lay within the reach of their valorous[k] efforts. They were come (he said) into Italy, to deliver the inhabitants from the government of strangers, and the tyranny of domestic rulers. Bonaparte, being now freed from his Sardinian enemy, ad-

Austrian and Piedmontese armies. April 22d, by a victory at Mondovi, he compels the king of Sardinia to yield at discretion, who receives peace from his dictation.

Bonaparte surmounts the natural ramparts of Italy.

Wise measures to keep up the spirit of his troops.

[h] Campaigns of Bonaparte.
[i] See Livy, book xxi.
[k] Annual Register, 1796, p. 91.

vanced

vanced against the Austrians. The German general and his troops, bravely as they fought, being repeatedly defeated, retired near Milan, the capital of Lombardy, and made a stand at a very strong post at Lodi[1], determined to venture a battle, which was necessary, to save Milan and the whole Austrian interest in Italy. Between Bonaparte and the imperialists was the river Adda, over which there was a long bridge, that Beaulieu had intended to break down, but was prevented by the quick approach of the French general. It was protected, however, by so numerous an artillery, that the Austrians did not imagine the French would be able to force a passage. Bonaparte saw the tremendous danger, but, instantaneous in reasoning, he perceived the exact predicament in which he stood. The astonishing successes which sprang from his direction of valorous enthusiasm, had been carried to their present pitch by the opinion that his troops entertained of themselves and their general; and failure in an attempt however arduous, by lessening their conception of their resistless force, would damp their glowing animation, and diminish the energy of their future efforts. In such circumstances the most adventurous boldness was solid wisdom. Guided by these reflections and sentiments, he determined to try every effort, and to encounter every personal danger, in order to carry a point on which such momentous interest appeared to depend. Forming together the most select bodies of his army, in the midst of a most tremendous fire he led them in person to the attack of the bridge. His presence, and that of all the chief officers in the French army, animated the soldiers to such a degree, that they rushed forward with an impetuosity which nothing was able to withstand. They crossed the

CHAP. LVIII. 1796.

Battle at the bridge of Lodi.

Signal exploit and victory of Bonaparte.

[1] Ibid. p. 94. and Campaigns of Bonaparte.

CHAP. LVIII. 1796.

bridge, and assailed the whole line of the Austrian artillery, which was instantly broken. They fell with equal fury on the troops that advanced to the charge, threw them into disorder, and put them to flight on every side; and the victory was complete. Bonaparte having thus defeated the principal army of the imperialists, after taking Pavia, proceeded to Milan, and, with its capital, subdued the greater part of Lombardy before the end of May. The Austrian army retreated towards the frontiers, and the imperialists being no longer able to protect Italy, the pope and the king of Naples sued for an armistice, which was granted to the king of Naples on condition of his observing a neutrality; but the pope was required to pay a large sum of money, and also to deliver a great number of pictures, busts, and statues. The victorious French required from the Italian princes, as a condition of peace, the delivery of the various monuments of art. Imitating the Romans in rapacity as well as valour, they sent the pictures, statues, and sculptures, to the national repositories. This spoliation of monuments, which, bearing signal testimony to the taste and genius of the Italians, were regarded with national pride and veneration, and which had escaped the irruptions of all former plunderers, excited the most poignant regret and indignation among the conquered, and was universally condemned and execrated by all civilised nations.[m]

The French imitate the Romans in their rapacity as well as valour.

[m] In this part of his narrative, the author of Otridge's Annual Register makes the following observations: "To deprive the poor Italians of objects so long endeared to them by habit and possession, seemed an act of tyranny exercised upon the vanquished in the wantonness of power. Those objects had been respected by all parties, in the vicissitude of those events that had so frequently subjected the places that contained them to different masters: the French were the first who had conceived the idea of seizing them as a matter of mere property. Herein they were accused of consulting their vanity, rather than their taste for the fine arts. The Romans, in their triumphant periods, had plundered the Greeks of all the master-pieces they could find in their country. This appeared to the French a precedent fit for their imitation, and a sanction for robbing the Italians of what they esteemed the most valuable part of their property, and the most honourable proof they still retained of their former superiority in those departments of genius."

WHEREVER

CHAP. LVIII.

1796.

WHEREVER Bonaparte carried his victorious arms, as soon as he had effected conquest, and exacted the contributions to which, as a conqueror, he deemed his efforts entitled, he endeavoured to mingle conciliation [n], especially in his treatment of the lower classes. The commons, who were by no means indisposed towards the French republicanism, which promised protection against aristocratical domination and tyranny, he treated with the greatest mildness, professing that he had entered Italy to vindicate their rights, and to promote their happiness. But the irreligious and democratical spirit of the French revolution, excited his army to express and manifest the most contemptuous irreverence towards the priests, whom they represented as impostors; and detestation against the nobles, whom they painted as oppressors. These two orders were no less incensed against the French, whom they regarded with equal abhorrence and dread, as the destroyers of religion, and the levellers of the privileged orders. As they still retained a considerable influence, they endeavoured to employ it in inciting the commonalty against the republicans. A conspiracy was formed for a general insurrection, and commotions were prevalent throughout Lombardy: Pavia was intended to be the principal scene of the plot: but the active vigilance of Bonaparte discovered the designs before they were ripe for execution, and his force soon crushed their machinations: he ordered the chief conspirators to be shot, and the others to find two hundred hostages for their peaceable behaviour in future. Thither, for the same reason, he also sent the nobles and priests of the insurgent districts, and denounced the same punishment against all who should afterwards be found instigating insurrection. He next issued a pro-

Bonaparte mingles conciliatory policy, especially towards the populace.

Conspiracies at the instance of the nobles and clergy,

are disconcerted,

and punished.

[n] See Annual Register, 1796, p. 97.

CHAP. LVIII. 1796.

clamation, declaring, that those who did not lay down their arms within twenty-four hours, and take an oath of obedience to the French republic, should be treated as rebels, and their houses committed to the flames. Having employed these effectual means to crush insurrection, Bonaparte was enabled to return to conciliatory efforts. He with great activity and success endeavoured to attach Italian partisans to the French cause. Besides the commonalty, who rejoiced at the idea of the freedom proffered by the French, Bonaparte gained great numbers of another class. The literary men of Italy were, as in France, with very few exceptions, inimical to the existing orders, and eager for changes under which they hoped to attain higher power and importance than they possessed under the clergy and nobles. Bonaparte readily saw that they might be rendered very useful instruments in directing public opinion, as long as insinuation and persuasion should be necessary or expedient; and that votaries of physical studies might be employed in promoting the productiveness of the new conquests. So far did Bonaparte apply conciliation, as to court those who would readily join against the possessors of property; and so far did he patronize literature and philosophy, as to make them labouring tools for his accommodation, emolument, and aggrandisement. His soldiers pretending to HONOUR, he merely *used;* they were a different kind of tools, which he never failed to employ, when conciliation, literary patronage, or any other persuasives, would not suit his purpose.

Bonaparte gains to his interest the men of genius and literature,

and endeavours to bring every kind of talent into efficient action.

He resumes military operations:

MANTUA only, of the Austrian dominions, remained in the possession of the emperor. Bonaparte, not having a sufficient train of artillery to reduce that strong fortress immediately by storm, resolved to pursue the Austrian army. The broken forces of the Germans had, in their retreat, taken refuge in

marches from Italy towards Germany.

the Venetian territory; and thither they were closely pursued by the French. Bonaparte published an address to the government of Venice, assuring them, that, in following the enemies of France into the Venetian territories, he would observe the strictest discipline, and treat the inhabitants with all the amity and consideration that were due to the ancient friendship subsisting between the two nations. Meanwhile, the Austrians took possession of Peschiera, by the connivance[o] of the Venetians, to whom the town belonged. Here Beaulieu hoped to be able to make a stand, till succours should arrive from Germany. Bonaparte, desirous to drive him from Italy, or to compel him to surrender, advanced to that town, intending to cut off his retreat to the Tyrol by the eastern side of the lake of Garda. On the 30th of May, several divisions of the French approached the bridge of Borghetto, by which Bonaparte proposed to effect a passage over the Mincio, and surround Beaulieu's army. The Austrians employed the utmost efforts to defend the bridge; but the French crossed it after a warm action; — and the German general, perceiving their intent, withdrew in haste from his position at Peschiera, and retired with the the utmost expedition to the river Adige, which, having passed, he broke down all the bridges to prevent the French from continuing the pursuit, and by these means he secured his retreat to Tyrol. The Venetians had given refuge to the brother of the late king of France, who was called by the royalists Louis XVIII.; but, anxious to prevent or avert the displeasure of the French republic, they directed Louis to quit the Venetian territories. Bonaparte, on the 3d of June, took possession of the city of Verona, the late residence of the French prince, and continued his progress. The emperor,

[o] See Annual Register for 1796, p. 98.

finding

CHAP. LVIII.

finding the victorious republicans advancing from Italy to Germany, gave the command of his troops to marshal Wurmser, who, having collected a powerful force, marched to encounter Bonaparte. The Austrian troops contained the flower of the emperor's army, which far exceeded the conception of the enemy, and inspired both the emperor and his ally with hopes of retrieving the fortune of the campaign. Bonaparte had found it necessary to divide his troops, in order to secure the conquered territory, and the situation of the French at this period was extremely critical: they had subdued an extensive range of country, to preserve which they had been obliged to detach considerable numbers from their main body. The remains of Beaulieu's army, and the reinforcements which arrived with marshal Wurmser, composed a much more formidable strength than that which Bonaparte commanded; but the confidence which he placed in the valour of his soldiers, and that which they reposed in his superior genius and skill, were more than adequate to numbers and even disciplined valour. The Austrians had secured the passes into the Tyrol, by works which extended from the lake of Garda to the river Adige. Here Wurmser posted himself in the end of June; but the French generals, Massena and Joubert, at the head of a select body, broke into his lines, by turning his right and left: they seized his baggage and standing camp, and forced him to retreat with the utmost precipitation. Bonaparte, meanwhile, had crushed a new insurrection in Lago, an ecclesiastical town; and, from the many fortresses which he captured, having collected a formidable train of artillery, he determined to invest Mantua. About the middle of July, he commenced a regular siege, and pressed on his operations with incessant vigour: he summoned the town to surrender, but without effect. Having erected batteries for firing red-hot

1796. Wurmser takes the field with a fresh army of Austrians:

is repulsed by the French.

Bonaparte invests Mantua.

CHAP. LVIII.

red-hot balls, he cannonaded the city, and reduced several parts of it to ashes. Meanwhile Wurmser, having received very great reinforcements, resolved to repair his recent defeat by raising the siege of Mantua. Having attacked the divisions of the French that were placed near lake Garda, he dislodged them from their positions; and, with a very numerous and formidable host, advanced between them and Bonaparte's army. He marched towards Mantua, while another division of Austrians also approached: Bonaparte, aware that the force which he now had with him was unequal to a conflict with the combined armies of Austria, resolved to encounter them separately. This purpose, however, he could not execute without abandoning the siege of Mantua, which he most reluctantly raised on the 30th of July. Several engagements were fought between the Austrians and the French, in which the republicans were generally superior, though without a decisive event. Bonaparte, in examining one of his advanced posts, found himself surrounded at Lonado by four thousand Austrians, while he had only twelve hundred. With ready presence of mind, he impressed the German commander with a belief that his whole army was at hand, under which notion that leader surrendered himself with his detachment. Escaped from this danger, the French general determined to bring the contest to a final issue; but to cover his intentions, he feigned to be desirous of avoiding an engagement. Wurmser, imputing his conduct to consciousness of inferior force, hastened to bring on a battle. On the 5th of August, while, deceived by appearances, he was advancing, the French army, by one of its rapid movements, was formed into two divisions, the one of which received the enemy in front, whilst the other, having doubled the right wing during the night, attacked them in the rear. Wurmser, hemmed in by this dexterous stratagem,

1796.

Wurmser approaches to its relief.

Bonaparte is surrounded at Lonado; he extricates himself by a stratagem, and induces a much superior army to surrender.

Successive victories of Bonaparte.

CHAP. LVIII.

1796.

stratagem, made, with his veteran host, a most gallant and obstinate resistance; but the impetuous valour of the republicans bore down all before them, and obtained a still greater victory than even at the battle of Lodi. The losses of the Austrians amounted to seventy pieces of cannon, all the carriages belonging to their army, more than twelve thousand prisoners, and six thousand slain. The Austrian government, still unbroken by continued disaster, raised numerous levies, and Wurmser once more made head against Bonaparte in the field. A succession of conflicts ensued, in which the French, without gaining any signal victory, were greatly superior. At length, in the month of November, a battle was fought at Arcola, in which, after a vicissitude of attacks and repulses, during the fifteenth and sixteenth, and a very obstinate and doubtful contest, the French finally gained a signal victory[p], and the Austrians did not again encounter the French in the field, during the present campaign. This event was completely decisive: the troops, that were beaten, were chiefly veterans; those who came with Wurmser were deemed the flower of the Austrian army, that had so obstinately contended with the best troops of France upon the Rhine. Wurmser himself was reputed an officer second to no one in the imperial service, or indeed in Europe, for valour, skill, and experience; and was deemed the last hope of Austria for the recovery of Italy. The Austrians, their allies, and all the friends of the cause in which they were engaged, had conceived the most sanguine expectations from the military talents of Wurmser, and the force by which they were supported. Both he and his soldiers did all that courage, discipline, and skill could perform, but against the impetuous enthusiasm of the republican

Decisive victory at Arcola;

[p] See Campaigns of Bonaparte.

forces,

forces, and the overpowering genius of Bonaparte, their efforts were unavailing. Throughout the whole course of this arduous trial, the powers and exertions of this leader astonished both friends and foes. Surrounded by difficulties of every sort, he acted with a clearness of penetration that foresaw and obviated them all: he removed impediments as fast as they arose, and took his measures with so much prudence and sagacity, that he could not be charged with having committed one false step. His body and his mind appeared reciprocally calculated for the support of each other: both were incessantly employed, the one in planning, and the other in personally forwarding every design that was conceived. [q]

CHAP. LVIII. 1796.

Of Austrian Italy, Mantua still remained unsubdued; thither the republican force was now bent, and the imperialists once more collected a formidable army for its preservation. Various conflicts ensued, in which Austrian firmness and intrepidity made a most vigorous stand against the impetuous valour and enthusiastic animation of the republicans. At length they again encountered each other, in a pitched battle, at Rivoli; the imperialists in valour and conduct equalled any of their former most heroic efforts, and once appeared to be on the eve of victory; when Bonaparte, with the usual rapidity of his genius and energy, made an instantaneous movement, which surrounded a great body of Austrians, entirely defeated them, and facilitated the discomfiture of their principal strength: by this disaster, all hopes of defending Mantua were vanished; and the garrison was obliged to capitulate.

at Rivoli.

Capture of Mantua.

While the contest appeared doubtful between the imperial and republican generals, the Italian clergy, hoping the Austrians might prove successful, again renewed their machinations to incite the people to

Commotions at Rome.

[q] See Otridge's Annual Register for 1796, p. 108.

insur-

CHAP. LVIII.

1796.

insurrection; but the victories of the French soon suppressed these attempts throughout the north of Italy. In Rome the anti-gallican party was much more violent and open in its proceedings, than in other Italian districts. The pope, having heard that the siege of Mantua was raised, without waiting either to examine the reasons, or observe the consequences, of this movement, sent a legate to retake possession of Ferrara, in direct opposition to the convention concluded with Bonaparte, and to the wishes of the people, who were noted for dislike to the Roman government. Priests and monks that swarm in the seat of ancient heroism, deviated from their habitual indolence, and were incessantly active in stimulating their votaries to outrage against the French republicans who happened to be in the papal dominions. Intelligence soon arriving of the victories of the French general, repressed these instigators of discord; but Bonaparte was too much occupied in pursuing the Austrians for the present to attend to the coercion of these puny opponents.

As the season was too far advanced for continuing warfare among the mountains of the Tyrol, Bonaparte now directed his attention to the internal settlement of Italy, and to the punishment of revolt. The power of the French republic over all Italy, now deserted by the Austrians, was so extensive and irresistible, as to render opposition, however just, totally inexpedient; and not only useless, but ruinous. The secular princes of Italy had faithfully adhered to the treaties which they had concluded with the French republic, and were paying the stipulated contributions. The court of Rome alone was guilty of the most unwise violation of its engagements. In order more effectually to inflame the minds of the people against the republicans[r], the pope and his priests, his only counsellors,

Conduct of the papal government.

[r] Otridge's Annual Register, 1797.

had

had recourse to the stale artifices and despicable tricks known by the name of *pious frauds*. They pretended the intervention of Heaven, and positively asserted the performance of miracles, in many of the churches, in vindication of the catholic faith and the papal supremacy, outraged and menaced by the conduct of the French. The streets were filled with processions of saints and images, who were to arrest the progress of the French general. He who was fit to have combated a Scipio or a Cæsar, was to be overcome by friars; he whom the Austrian eagle could not withstand, was to yield to a Romish owl. This ridiculous mummery, however, had its effect; though eventually very pernicious to its contrivers. In the papal metropolis there is, as among all Italians, a considerable portion of sagacity; and among the higher ranks of the laity, no small share of literature; yet, those who could most easily detect and expose these impostures, would not find it safe to interfere in baulking their clerical promoters. On such occasions, therefore, gentlemen and liberal scholars, including some of the clergy themselves, carefully avoided attempts to counteract deception that was practised on credulity. At present the zeal of all classes and conditions was kindled; the populace was impelled to the utmost fury against all who did not readily believe the asserted miracles, or presumed to trust more to reason and their senses than to the infallibility of the church; manifested the most ardent eagerness to go to war against the republicans and infidels of France; and, like the Mahomedan bigots, they trusted to supernatural assistance in combating the enemy: a very great majority joined in preparations for war. The French envoy at Rome was active in endeavouring to convince the administration, that by perseverance in hostility they would expose themselves and their country to very great evils, which they might avoid, merely by adhering to

CHAP. LVIII. 1796.

The pope attempts to excite war against Bonaparte.

CHAP. LVIII.

1796. The French general makes conciliatory overtures, to the terms of pacification: but his admonitions and remonstrances were altogether unavailing. Bonaparte, desirious of conciliating the affections of the Italians, ardently wished for a pacification with the head of the Romish church, a respectful treatment of whom, he was conscious, would be highly gratifying to all the Roman catholic states and people. Resolved, therefore, to forbear coërcive measures, he wrote a letter to cardinal Mattœi, prime minister to his holiness, requesting him to prevail on the pope to recommend pacific negociations, in order to prevent the march of the French armies into his territories, and to represent to him the inutility of arming his subjects against men who had overcome so many formidable enemies. To this letter no answer was made until after the battle of Arcola had finally crushed all hopes that the Austrians could save Italy from the French.

Reply of the pope. The pope instructed his minister in his reply[s], to state to the general the anxiety of his holiness to remedy the disorders which had so long distracted France, and to restore amity between France and the Roman see: the French, elated with the success of their arms, had made requisitions incompatible with the dictates of his conscience, and subversive of all Christian and moral principles: grieved at such intolerable demands, he had implored the assistance of Heaven to direct him how to act in so difficult a situation: doubtless he was inspired on this occasion by that Holy Spirit which had animated the primitive martyrs in the cause for which they suffered: having laboured in vain to bring the directory to a more equitable way of thinking, he thought it necessary to resist them by open force: the death that awaited men in battle, was the commencement of eternal life and happiness to the righteous, and everlasting misery to the wicked: though infidels and pretended philosophers ridicule

[s] Otridge's Annual Register, 1797.

the

the idea of assistance from heaven, yet, if providence were pleased to interpose, the French would contend in vain against the power of the Almighty; if the French were desirous of peace, the Roman see desired it still more; if attainable on conscientious and equitable terms. Such a letter addressed to a victorious general at the head of a resistless army, that little regarded spiritual admonitions, was not likely to interrupt the republican career, or change their resolution. The pope, meanwhile, persisted in preparing for war, and endeavoured to interest those powers, to whose predecessors in former times the will of a pontiff served for a law. But now, both circumstances and sentiments were totally changed: even the court of Spain, heretofore the chief prop of papal domination, sent an answer, recommending to the pope the demission of all temporal power, and the confinement of future proceedings to the exercise of the heavenly virtues.[b]

Bonaparte invades the Roman territories.

BONAPARTE, finding no prospect of overawing his holiness to submission, resolved to recommence actual hostilities. Publishing a manifesto, he charged the pontiff with a breach of the convention; and turned against the papal effeminate Romans, genius, courage, and conduct, which the disciplined heroism of republican Rome, under her most consummate generals, would have found arduous difficulty in resisting. Bonaparte was too artful wantonly to shock the religious prejudices of a country which he wished to govern: having entered the Roman territories, he issued a proclamation,

[b] The Spanish minister, denominated the prince of peace, replied to the pope's nuncio soliciting the interference of Spain, to the following effect: "That the conduct of the court of Rome respecting the French, was temporizing and insincere; and that those who were intrusted with the administration of its political concerns, had, by their imprudence and erroneous management, brought them into so critical a situation, that it seemed advisable for the preservation of the personal safety of the pope that he should resign his temporal possessions, in order to secure the rights of the church, and to prove his disinterestedness, and the fervour of his piety, by an example that would prove so edifying to all the christian world."—See Otridge's Annual Register, for 1797, p. 12.

assuring

CHAP. LVIII. 1796.

assuring the inhabitants that he would protect religion as well as property, and maintain the public peace: he warned them to abstain from all acts of enmity, which would certainly draw down upon them vengeance and all the horrors of war; every town and village that sounded the tocsin on the approach of the French, was threatened with instant destruction: and it was denounced that every district where a Frenchman was assassinated, should be declared hostile, and subjected to heavy contributions. The papal army having ventured to encounter the republicans, was completely defeated. Bonaparte compelled the pontiff to sue for peace[u], to cede part of his territories, and to pay a sum that would amount to thirty millions of French livres, on account of the last rupture, besides fulfilling the conditions of the armistice in the preceding summer.

and compels the pontiff to sue for peace.

Amount of the French acquisitions in Italy in this campaign.

THUS, in one campaign, Bonaparte overcame four successive armies of the bravest and best disciplined troops, much more numerous than his own, commanded by skilful and able generals; extended the territories of the French republic from the gulph of Genoa to the Adriatic sea, from the Alps to the Tiber, and her commanding influence over all Italy, where his versatile dexterity seemed to secure what his military abilities had acquired. Those who estimate conquerors merely by their warlike achievements, without considering either *the justness of the cause, or the wisdom of the pursuit*, must regard Bonaparte with high honour. He undoubtedly displayed all that combination of intellectual and active powers which rendered Alaric, Genseric, and Attila, with their respective Goths, Vandals, and Huns, irresistibly successful in subjugation and plunder. But in one instrument

[u] This peace was not concluded till February 1797; but being part of a series of military and political conduct belonging to 1796, to preserve the unity of action unbroken, I have included it in the narrative of the present year.

of

of iniquitous acquisition, the Corsican surpassed the northern invaders: they simply employed force, whereas he used artifice and deceit, as well as violence and rapine. But exceeding Attila, or any of his co-operators, in craft and versatility, he resembled them in sentiment. With all the intrepidity, resolution, and courage of a valiant combatant, he was totally deficient in elevation of mind, and bore no resemblance to the grandeur of a Roman, much less the Macedonian conqueror. Besides, Bonaparte found auxiliaries to which the lofty soul of an Alexander would have disdained to resort: he successfully employed money [x], as well as arms, in promoting his victories. In this his most difficult campaign, Bonaparte proved himself an able, energetic, and dexterous adventurer; but in no instance manifested either the magnanimous hero, or the wise statesman.

Germany invaded by Jourdain and Moreau.

In Germany also the French generals displayed distinguished ability, and made very forcible exertions, though with less permanent success. Jourdain entered the empire by the Upper Rhine, while Moreau marched through Suabia. Charles of Austria, brother to the emperor, a young prince of heroic courage and great military enterprise, at this time headed the Austrian army. At the village of Ettingen, the gallant prince encountered the republican general on the 8th of July, and, after a very bloody battle, was obliged to give way to the impetuous valour of the French. Moreau was now master of Suabia, was penetrating into Bavaria; Jourdain had entered Franconia, and from the confines of Bohemia to the mountains of Tyrol the advancing chain of the republican armies extended, menacing the invasion of Austria itself, and the capture of the Austrian capital. The duke of

The archduke Charles.

Successive battles with Jourdain.

Danger of the empire.

[x] I am assured by gentlemen who resided at Vienna during a great part of the war, that it was generally thought there that many of the Austrian officers were bribed.

CHAP. LVIII.

1796.

Wirtemberg, and the other princes of the empire, who had still remained in alliance with their imperial head, were now obliged to sue for peace, and to receive it from the victorious republicans on such terms as they chose to grant. The emperor, thus deserted by his auxiliaries, was in dreadful consternation; but for the present, the efforts of his gallant brother relieved him from his fears. On entering the empire, the French forces had found the commonalty in general favourable to principles and projects which they conceived would reduce their domineering tyrants; but the rapacity of their exactions [y], though in some degree necessary for the supply of the troops, yet oppressive, and injurious to the forced contributors, changed their attachment into hatred. After his adverse conflict with Moreau, the archduke Charles had lost no time in recruiting, collecting, and rallying his forces. Jourdain's army was now advanced near Ratisbon: prince Charles, leaving a strong body to watch the motions of Moreau, repaired with his main army against Jourdain: being daily reinforced, he, after several bloody, but partial conflicts, on the 28th of August, engaged Jourdain in a pitched battle, and compelled him to retreat with considerable loss. The Austrians continued to molest him as he fell back towards the Rhine: Jourdain faced and sometimes repulsed his pursuers, and at last arriving at the Rhine, repassed the river.

is warded off by the valour of the archduke,

who compels Jourdain to evacuate Germany.

Progress and situ-

Moreau, deprived of the co-operation of Jourdain, was now exposed to the whole force of the

[y] Their levies of money, and other requisitions, excited universal alarm. The duke of Wirtemberg had been assessed four millions: the circle of Suabia, twelve millions, besides to furnish eight thousand horses, five thousand oxen, one hundred and fifty thousand quintals of corn, one hundred thousand sacks of oats, a proportionable quantity of hay, and one hundred thousand pair of shoes: eight millions were demanded from the circle of Franconia, with a very large supply of horses: great sums were also required from the cities of Frankfort, Wurtzburg, Bamberg, and Nuremberg, together with an immense quantity of other articles, for the subsistence and clothing of the French troops. — See Otridge's Annual Register for 1796, p. 136.

German

CHAP. LVIII.

German armies, and found it necessary to retreat. A superior host assailed his rear, and a large detachment harassed his front, while the peasants rose in every direction and intercepted his convoys: but Moreau repulsed his pursuers, defeated all the bodies that opposed his march; with masterly skill and rapid execution, changing his front according to the direction of the enemy, he by offensive operations secured his defence. Latour, a very able and enterprising general, commanded the pursuers, and notwithstanding reiterated defeats, still continued to harass the French rear. Moreau now advanced to the middle of Suabia, but still at a great distance from the Rhine; he perceived that he must again resist a general action, and unless he again defeated the Austrians who were nearest, they speedily would be joined by such numerous reinforcements, that all resistance would be vain. On the 2d of October, a select body attacked the right wing of the Austrian army posted between Biberach and the Danube: after routing this division, they advanced upon the centre, which was at the same time vigorously assailed by the centre of Moreau's army. The contest lasted six hours, and was extremely bloody on both sides: at length the Austrians gave way, and were so completely defeated, that they retired with the utmost expedition to a great distance from the field of battle. Their loss amounted to near five thousand men killed and taken, twenty pieces of cannon, several standards, and a quantity of ammunition.[z] Still, however, there was a strong army between Moreau and the Rhine. He proceeded with caution and firmness through every impediment, and driving the Austrians before him, crossed the Danube. On the 9th, his army entered a defile called the Valley of Hell, from the frightful appearance of the rocks and mountains that hang over it on each

1796. ation of Moreau.

Masterly and successful retreat in the face of the German host.

[z] See Otridge's Annual Register for 1796. p. 140.

CHAP. LVIII.

1796.

side, and in many places are hardly the space of thirty feet asunder. At the outlet of the valley a powerful body of Austrians were stationed; behind was Latour, who having again collected a considerable army, pressed the French rear; and every inlet on each side was lined with troops, ready to assail the flanks of the republicans as they passed. To guard against this multiplicity of dangers, Moreau disposed of his right and left in such a manner, that the rear of them protected his entrance into that valley, by facing the forces under Latour; and the van, by advancing upon Navaudorf and Petrasch on their respective wings, obliged them to divide their strength and attention. Having made these dispositions, the French marched, in a compact order, along the valley. The enemy on the rear were repulsed; and, on the right and left, did not venture an attack of troops so prepared for terrible resistance; the Austrians, stationed in front, durst not attempt their molestation. Moreau passed the defile, marched on to Friburg, and brought his army in safety to the Rhine, by as masterly a retreat as any recorded in the annals of history.*

Britain signally successful where she fights alone.

West Indies.

General Abercrombie retakes St. Lucie, and quells insurrection in the

DURING this campaign, the attention of the French was so much directed to land efforts, that Britain encountered little opposition in her maritime exertions, and those military enterprises which depended chiefly on naval co-operation. A considerable armament had been fitted out under general Abercrombie, to prosecute our successes in the West Indies. In April, leaving Barbadoes, he sailed to the valuable settlement of Demerary, belonging to the Dutch, which speedily surrendered to the British arms. In the month of May, he

* The impartial historian cannot even except Xenophon's retreat with the ten thousand, since, though the space was much more extensive, the opponents were only desultory marauders, and not regular troops; the opposition was only occasional, not constant and systematic.

CHAP. LVIII.

1796.

recovered the island of St. Lucie, and soon after quelled the insurrections which had been excited by the noted Victor Hughes. The British still maintained their conquests in the very valuable island of St. Domingo: the French had entirely abandoned that settlement; the people of colour and the negroes possessed the interior country, whilst the English occupied various parts of the coast. But here they had to encounter an enemy much more dreadful than the French forces, in a pestilence so fatally known by the name of the yellow fever; which, having raged with most destructive violence in all tropical latitudes of the west, and extended to the northern climate of Philadelphia, and even New York, had been still more generally mortal in St. Domingo.

Other islands.

Progress in St. Domingo.

In Saldanna bay, a Dutch fleet of seven sail of the line, which had sailed in hopes of retaking the Cape, was captured by admiral Elphinstone. The Dutch settlements in the east were reduced by our fleets; among the rest, the island of Ceylon, one of the most important possessions in European India. In the Mediterranean, the Corsicans shewing themselves inclined to return to their connection with the French republicans, Britain judged it expedient to relinquish a settlement, the expence and trouble of protecting which so totally overbalanced the advantages of the possession. At the close of the year, the French, encouraged by reports of disaffection in Ireland, and supposing our navy would be less vigilant in the winter season, made an attempt, with thirteen ships of the line, and a large body of troops, to make a descent at Bantry bay; but the stormy season dispersing the armament, the commander in chief, who had arrived at his place of destination, returned to Brest with the loss of a ship of the line and two frigates. Thus ended a campaign, in which Britain, acting on her own element, was uniformly successful; and, without any

Capture of Dutch ships and settlements.

CHAP. LVIII. 1796.

any very brilliant or difficult enterprise, made most important acquisitions. Her ally, stimulated by the British spirit, and assisted by British money, made extraordinary efforts, acquired partial advantage and signal honour; but, on the whole, incurred severe, extensive, and multiplied disasters and losses: her enemies, inefficient by sea, by land displayed military ability, attained splendid success, and warlike glory, which have been rarely equalled, and never surpassed, in the annals of history.

Birth of a princess, heir to the prince of Wales.

General election.

AMONG the domestic events of this year, was the birth of a princess, heir to the prince of Wales. During this summer there was a general election, but with much less contention than on any former occasion throughout the eighteenth century.

British government proposes to send an ambassador to Paris to negociate a peace.

BRITISH ministers had, during the recess, applied to the Danish ambassador at London, to transmit, through the Danish envoy at Paris, a declaration, stating his Britannic majesty's desire to conclude a peace, "on just and honourable conditions, and demanding the necessary passports for a person of confidence whom his majesty would send to Paris, with a commission to discuss with the government there all the measures the most proper to produce so desirable an end." The Danish minister having conveyed to the directory this manifestation of the British intentions, it was replied by the French government, "that the executive government would not receive or answer, from the enemies of the republic, any overture transmitted through an intermediate channel; but that, if England would send persons furnished with full powers and official papers, they might, upon the frontier, demand the passports necessary for proceeding to Paris." The court of London having applied for passports, nominated Lord Malmsbury as ambassador to Paris, who accordingly set out the beginning of October.

France agrees to receive an ambassador from Britain, and lord Malmsbury is sent.

CHAP. LIX.

Meeting of the new parliament — the king announces pacific intentions. — Difference of opinion on this subject between ministers and the votaries of Burke. — Burke's publication against a peace with regicides. — Earl Fitzwilliam reprobates negociation, unless monarchy be restored. — Ministers declare security attainable without the restoration of monarchy. — Opposition declare they do not believe the ministers really to desire peace. — Apprehensions of an invasion. — Powerful and extensive preparations for defence. — Law for establishing a militia in Scotland. — Army, navy, and pecuniary supplies. — Imposts begin to be severely felt by the lower and middling classes. — Negociation of lord Malmsbury at Paris — basis proposed by Britain, reciprocal restitution — France will not relinquish Belgium — abruptly requires the ultimatum *of the ambassador — which he is not empowered immediately to deliver — he is ordered to quit France. — British manifesto, charging France with the rupture. — Splendid eloquence of Mr. Pitt on this subject. — Mr. Erskine's view of the causes and consequences of the war. — Reasonings of Mr. Fox. — Motions for the removal of Ministers — are negatived by great majorities. — Gloomy aspect of affairs at the commencement of* 1797 *— enormous increase of national debt — advances and state of the bank — correspondence between the bank and ministers — alarms for public credit — fears of an invasion — unusual demand for specie — rapid decrease of cash in the bank — public agitation — application to government — order of council to suspend payments in cash — the subject is discussed in Parliament — opposition declare the bank to be in a state of insolvency from the infatuation of ministers — ministers allege, and the bank proves, its property far to exceed its engagements — bill to enable the bank to pay in notes instead of cash. — Complaints of the sailors — artifices of disaffected agitators — alarming mutiny at Portsmouth — is quieted by lord Howe. — An augmentation of pay is granted by parliament. — More outrageous and dangerous mutiny at the Nore — Parker — the insurgents block up*

up the Thames — alarm in London — the sailors at length return to obedience. — Parker tried and executed. — Law rendering the instigation of mutiny capital felony. — State of Ireland. — Lord Moira's proposed address to his Majesty on the subject — negatived. — Motion for parliamentary reform, and inquiries into the state of the nation — negatived. — Marriage of the prince of Wirtemberg to the princess royal of England — portion bestowed on her highness. — Parliament rises.

CHAP. LIX.

THE new parliament met on the 6th of October; and his majesty informed the houses that he had omitted no endeavours for setting on foot negociations to restore peace to Europe, and to secure for the future the general tranquillity. But nothing (he observed) could contribute so effectually to this end, as to manifest that we possessed both the determination and resources to oppose, with increased activity and energy, the farther efforts with which we might have to contend. [a] On the general propriety of a negotiation, there was a division of opinion between those who had promoted the war and supported its continuance. We have already stated, that Mr. Burke, in inculcating hostility against revolutionary France, chose different grounds from ministers. In the progress of the war he had adhered to his original opinion, that the restoration of monarchy and the ancient orders, under certain modifications, ought to be the sole and avowed purpose of the war; and that no peace could be secure until that object was effected. Under that impression, he wrote his "Thoughts on a Regicide Peace," intended to prove, that the system of France was impious, enormously wicked, and destructive to all who were within its sphere: we must either conquer the revolution, or be destroyed ourselves: peace would enable it to operate rapidly to our ruin: let us, therefore, avoid peace. Earl Fitz-

1796. Meeting of the new parliament: the king announces pacific intentions.

Difference of opinion on this subject between ministers and the votaries of Burke.

Burke's publication against a peace with regicides.

[a] King's Speech, State Papers, October 6th, 1796.

william,

CHAP. LIX.

1796.

william, the intimate friend of Mr. Burke, in a considerable degree adopted these opinions, and reprobated negociation. To restore order (he said); to defend the civilized states of Europe against the danger that threatened them; to protect persons and property from a fatal devastation, and suppress the tendency of innovating and pernicious doctrines; were the ostensible objects of the war, and upon these principles they had supported its continuance. If it were wise to negotiate now, the same wisdom ought to have been manifested four years ago; for the causes of war, which then existed, still operated with equal force, and proved the necessity of perseverance in hostility to the French system. Ministers declared they had never stated, that the existence of a republic in France was an insurmountable bar to peace: they had expressed what they still believed, that the best issue to the contest would be, the re-establishment of monarchy in France; yet they had never pledged themselves, much less the parliament, to an opinion so extravagant, as that without the attainment of this object there was no hope or possibility of peace. They were always resolved to seek peace with France, whenever it was attainable with SECURITY. The French government now appeared to have some tendency to moderation; our own country was very much improved in point of tranquillity, which might be chiefly imputed to the wise laws against sedition and treason that had been enacted in the last session. Those who had always reprobated the war, expressed their hearty approbation of the declared intention to negotiate. Judging however (they said) from the conduct, and not from the profession of ministers, they did not give them full credit for sincerity.[b] Mr. Pitt strongly represented, that the surest way of obtaining favourable conditions

Earl Fitzwilliam reprobates negociation unless monarchy be restored.

Ministers declare security attainable without the restoration of monarchy.

Opposition declare they do not believe the ministers really to desire peace.

[b] See speeches of Messrs. Fox and Sheridan, Parliamentary Debates, October 1796.

CHAP. LIX.

1796.

ditions of peace, was to be prepared for war; and exhibited a very flattering account of the flourishing condition of the country, and the extent of her resources, which were increased beyond all former calculations or hopes.

Apprehensions of an invasion.

A CLAUSE in his majesty's speech had declared the king's apprehension that the enemy were preparing an invasion upon this island. Mr. Pitt very early in the session recommended adoption of measures for repelling the designed, as well as future attempts. For this purpose he formed a plan for levying fifteen thousand men from the different parishes for the sea service, and another for recruiting the regular regiments. In the projected levies for the land service, he considered two objects; first, the means of calling together a land force sufficient of itself to repel an invasion, even independently of our naval armaments; and, secondly, to adopt such measures in the levies as should not materially interfere with the agriculture, commerce, and general industry of this kingdom.

Powerful and extensive preparations for defence.

The primary object was to raise, and gradually train, such a force as might in a short time be fit for service. For this purpose he proposed a supplementary levy of militia, to be grafted on the old establishment, of the number of sixty thousand men; not to be immediately called out, but to be enrolled, officered, and completely trained, so as to be fit for service at a moment of danger. He also proposed to provide a considerable force of irregular cavalry, to be levied in the following manner: every person who kept ten horses, should be obliged to provide one horse, and one horseman, to serve in a corps of militia; and those who kept more than ten, should provide in the same proportion; and that those who kept fewer than ten, were to form themselves into classes, in which it should be decided by ballot, who, at the common expence, should provide the horse and the horseman:

man: these troops were to be furnished with uniform and accoutrements, arranged into corps, and put under proper officers. The whole number of cavalry proposed to be raised by this mode was twenty thousand: the other supplemental troops amounted to seventy-five thousand men. Among the means proposed for internal defence, a bill was introduced by Mr. Dundas, for raising and embodying a militia in Scotland, and an act for that purpose was passed without opposition. The whole land forces of the country, intended for the year 1797, were to consist of one hundred and ninety-five thousand, six hundred and ninety-four; and the navy was to amount to a hundred and twenty thousand men. The pecuniary supplies of the year were thirty-one millions borrowed, besides the annual income.

Law for establishing a militia in Scotland.

Army, navy, and pecuniary supplies.

Mr. Pitt still continued to display great financial skill in exempting the very lower class from the severest pressure of the new taxes, though the principal part bore very heavily on the comforts and accommodations of the middling ranks; the fresh imposts were upon tea, coffee, spirits, sugars, and various other articles of daily and general consumption; upon assessed taxes, postage, stage-coaches, and canal navigation: and in the minister's plans of finance, it began to be complained that the very high and opulent did not contribute so much more than the lower classes, as the proportion of their property would have admitted.

Imposts begin to be severely felt by the lower and middling classes.

While preparations were making for carrying on the war, lord Malmsbury was at Paris conveying from his court professions of a desire to negociate a peace. The French government, elated with the brilliant successes of the campaign, were far from relinquishing their determination to retain in their possession the whole of the left bank of the Rhine; this resolution they had intimated to Britain, and to it they were resolved to adhere. Lord Malmsbury

Negociation of lord Malmsbury at Paris.

CHAP. LIX.

1796.

bury arrived at Paris on the 22d of October. His first reception by the French government manifested a distrust of the sincerity of his employers; the negociation was however opened by a proposition from lord Malmsbury for reciprocal restitution. Great Britain had made very valuable acquisitions, and had incurred no losses herself; seeking from war, not the possessions of her adversary, but the general security, she was willing to restore her own conquests, in lieu of the acquisitions which France had won from her allies, as a basis for a treaty: therefore Britain proposed a general principle of reciprocal restitution. The directory replied, that receiving the British ambassador as the agent of Britain only, and not understanding him to have a commission to act for the allies of Britain, they could not now enter into the concerns of those powers: the mode which he proposed of an intermixture of other discussions with a treaty, they represented to be circuitous and dilatory; but to show their sincere and ardent desire of peace, if he procured credentials from the other belligerent states, they would take into consideration such specific proposals as he might then make. To these observations they added an opinion, that the British court was insincere in its overture; that its purposes were to prevent other powers from negociating a separate peace; and to facilitate the attainment of the supplies from the people of England, through a persuasion that the French refused an accommodation. To this assignation of motives which, whether true or fanciful, was irrelevant to the discussion, the British minister, with becoming dignity, forbore to reply: confining himself to the answer, he stated, that he had not been commissioned to enter upon a separate treaty: that Great Britain proposed to make in this transaction a common cause with her allies. The directory rejoined, that in a question of reci-

Basis proposed by Britain, reciprocal restitution.

procal

procal restitution, the chief object of consideraton was the relative condition of the respective parties. Of the original confederates, some were become the friends of France, and others observed a strict neutrality. The remaining allies of Britain were now weakened by their losses, and the desertion of their associates. France, it was insinuated, would not in a negociation of terms forget the circumstances in which she was placed. Besides the assertions and replications contained in official notes, conferences were carried on between lord Malmsbury and De la Croix, the French [c] minister. In these they respectively unfolded in more detailed statements the objects and resolutions of their employers.

The Netherlands constituted one of the principal topics of discourse. The British ambassador stated the restitution of Belgium as an indispensable article from which his Britannic majesty would not recede. From the outset indeed of the discussions, we find in his own letter, that he told the French minister that he must entertain no hopes that his majesty would ever consent to see the Netherlands a part of the French dominions. From the same official documents it appears, that the French minister proposed several schemes of equivalent for Belgium, but that lord Malmsbury considered himself as bound by his instructions to admit no proposition by which Belgium should continue annexed to France: On the other hand, the French minister declared, that the republic was resolved not to relinquish Belgium. In the course of their conferences, lord Malmsbury delivered his opinions freely on certain effects of the revolutionary system, which, extending to the West Indies, influenced the conduct of some of the British islands, and produced confusion and disorder; at

France will not relinquish Belgium:

[c] See State Papers, Dec. 20th, 1796.

length

CHAP. LIX.

1796.

length the directory agreed to the general principle of compensation, but required a specific description of the reciprocal restitutions proposed by Britain. The British ambassador stated the terms in contemplation to be, the restitution by France of her conquests from the emperor, the inclusion of Russia and Portugal in the treaty, and the restoration of the stadtholderian government in Holland. To these outlines, containing propositions so very contrary to the declared views of the French government, De la Croix answered by requiring the whole of his final demands, or, according to diplomatic language, his *ultimatum*, to be delivered in twenty-four hours. To this peremptory requisition lord Malmsbury replied, that it precluded at once all farther negociation; that if they disapproved of his propositions, or refused to take them into consideration, they ought to bring forward their own, that he might lay them before his sovereign. But he received no other answer than, that they could listen to no terms inconsistent with the constitution, and the engagements that were formed by the republic. They farther signified to him, that since he was obliged to consult the British ministry previously to all replies and communications, it evidently appeared that his powers were inadequate to the conduct of a treaty; and if the British ministry were inclined to pacific measures, and determined to treat on their present plan, farther communications might be as well forwarded by an epistolary correspondence: his residence, therefore, in Paris being totally unnecessary, they ordered him to depart in forty-eight hours. This injunction was notified to him on the 20th of December; and thus terminated the first negociation for peace between Great Britain and the French republic.

abruptly requires the ultimatum of the ambassador, which he is not immediately empowered to deliver.

He is ordered to quit France.

British manifesto, charging

THE British ministers professed to consider the abrupt conclusion of these overtures as arising totally

totally from France, and published a [d] manifesto, on the 27th of December, setting forth the pacific dispositions of the British government, and the malignant hostility of France. "The repeated endeavours of the French government (this document states) to defeat this mission in its outset, and to break off the intercourse thus opened, even before the first steps towards negociation could be taken; the indecent and injurious language, employed with a view to irritate; the captious and frivolous objections raised for the purpose of obstructing the progress of the discussion; all these have sufficiently appeared from the official papers which passed on both sides, and which are known to all Europe: the failure of the present negociation arises exclusively from the obstinate adherence of France to a claim which never can be admitted; a claim that the construction which that government affects to put on the internal constitution of its own country, shall be received by all other nations as paramount to every known principle of public law in Europe, as superior to the obligations of treaties, to the ties of common interest, to the most pressing and urgent considerations of general security." On these allegations ministers justified the continuance of the war as indispensably necessary: they endeavoured to prove that the rupture of the negociation was to be attributed to a systematical aversion to peace in the governing party in the French republic. The manifesto being laid before the houses of parliament, ministers assumed this declaration as a text, expatiated upon it in eloquent and impressive comments and suitable exhortations, and animated the indignant resentment of the parliament and country against the government of France. Mr. Pitt addressed the house in that style of splendid amplification which

CHAP. LIX. 1796.

France with the rupture.

Dec. 30th.

Splendid eloquence of Mr. Pitt on this subject.

[d] See State Papers, December 27th, 1796.

CHAP. LIX.

1796.

his oratory so happily assumes when his object is to strike the fancy, or rouse the passions. The question (he said) is not how much you will give for peace; but, how much disgrace you will suffer at the outset, how much degradation you will submit to as a preliminary? In these circumstances, then, are we to persevere in the war, with a spirit and energy worthy of the British name, and of the British character? or are we, by sending couriers to Paris, to prostrate ourselves at the feet of a stubborn and supercilious government, to yield to what they require, and to submit to whatever they may impose? I hope there is not a hand in his majesty's councils which would sign the proposal; that there is not a heart in this house which would sanction the measure; and, that there is not an individual in the British dominions who would act as the courier. In answering the speech of Mr. Pitt, Mr. Erskine took a general view of the causes and consequences of the war with France [e], and endeavoured to prove that the ostensible was not the real grounds of the rupture; but that we were actually to be at war for Belgium. Mr. Fox argued, that the whole amount of the minister's splendid oration that night, was to admit that we had been four years engaged in a war unprecedented in expence and force, and had done nothing: after all the efforts so honourable to Britons; after an addition of no less than two hundred millions to the national debt, and of nine millions to the permanent taxes of the country; after an enormous effusion of human blood, and an incalculable addition to human wretchedness; so far were we from having gained any object for

Mr. Erskine's view of the causes and consequences of the war.

Reasoning of Mr. Fox.

[e] His reasonings and sentiments upon this subject were afterwards expanded in his celebrated and popular publication so very universally read, and called for in so many editions. On the acuteness, ingenuity, and eloquence of this production, as well as its candid and liberal spirit, all impartial critics bestowed high praise, whether they agreed or disagreed in his statements, reasonings, and inferences, concerning the causes and consequences of the war.

which

which we had set out in the war, that the minister had this night come forward, in a long and elaborate speech, to shew that the only effect of all our efforts had been, that the enemy had, from success, become more unreasonable in their pretensions, and that all hopes of peace were removed to a greater distance than ever. To persevere in an undertaking productive of such prodigious expence and loss, without the least probability of advantage, or even indemnification, was altogether inconsistent, not only with wisdom but with common prudence and common sense. In private life, a person who should persevere in a ruinous undertaking, which wasted large property, and incurred overwhelming debts, without receiving any returns, would be, by all men in their senses, deemed an infatuated projector. The nature and character of such public conduct was the same; the only difference was, that the madness of the former involved a few individuals; the madness of the latter, a great, populous, and powerful nation, in its destructive effects. Persisting in a hostile spirit against the French republic, fondly wishing to restore their beloved arbitrary monarchy, ministers, in the face of the clearest and most decisive experience, still cherished their delusive hopes, embraced the most futile and often exploded theories, and still conceived that France, exhausted by her efforts, would yield to our dictates. With these ideas and views, they had resolved to prosecute this war, surpassing in its miseries our pernicious project of subjugating and enslaving America. So obstinate in madness, they had pretended to negociate, merely to induce the people to acquiesce in the expences which they so severely felt. The negociation, as it appeared from its circumstances and propositions, was never intended to be conciliatory. The British minister had categorically declared, that he could not recede from demanding

CHAP. LIX.

1796. the cession of Belgium; the French government as peremptorily declared, they would not recede from their refusal. The French, whether wisely or not, had merely availed themselves of the advantages which they had acquired in war. In denying to our demands the restitution of Belgium, they knew they could, by their power, support that denial; whereas we insisted on a concession which we had no means to enforce. As a question of expedience, it was extremely absurd to continue, on account of Belgium, so dreadful a war, when we were morally certain, that all our exertions to regain it would be unavailing. Our offers of compensation were totally inadequate to this valuable acquisition of the French; therefore we could not reasonably hope that they would have been accepted. We already saw, in the unexampled depreciation of the national funds on lord Malmsbury's return, the dreadful shock which public credit received; and we might reasonably expect, that, as the pressure of the new incumbrances came to be felt, the shock would be much greater: dejection and despondency were spread through the country; the nation was never in so deplorable

1797. and dreadful a situation. On these and similar grounds, Mr. Fox in the house of commons, and

Motions for the removal of ministers. lord Oxford in the house of peers, proposed addresses to the king, representing the conduct of ministry, in the whole of the war, as ruinous; in this negociation, as a compound of folly and deceit; and describing the country as hastening to destruction, through their infatuated counsels.

are negatived by great majorities. These addresses, however, were negatived, and opposite addresses, approving highly of the general system of ministers, of the principles and conduct of the negociation, and throwing the whole blame of the rupture upon the French, were carried by most numerous majorities.

THE sentiments of parliament, however, concerning

cerning ministers and the public affairs, were now very far from being general. Instead of deeming the country prosperous, great numbers went into the opposite extreme, and thought it, from the grievous burdens of the war, about to sink to ruin.

Gloomy aspect of affairs at the commencement of 1797.

In the earlier part of 1797, the aspect of affairs was gloomy and dismal. We were involved in a war, distressing beyond all historical record, without seeing any likelihood of an end; national credit seemed to totter from its base; rebellion was ready to burst out in the sister island; and, while foreign invasion threatened, those who had so long been the champions of Britain upon her own element, refused to obey orders issued for her defence, and turned their mutinous arms against their country.

Enormous increase of the national debt.

The rapid and enormous increase of the national debt, had, for two years, created an alarm among many proprietors in the public funds; and under this impression, sums to a great amount were sold out of the stocks, and vested in other securities. After the failure of the negociation, the sellers became much more numerous, and the prices fell proportionably. With fears of the downfal of national credit, were joined fears for the grand national repository, the bank. Visionary as, when examined, those apprehensions proved; there was a concurrence of circumstances which, without affecting the ultimate responsibility of the most opulent body recorded in commercial history, menaced their immediate solvency according to the literal tenor of their engagements. In the course of the war, the bank had advanced immense and extraordinary sums to government, far beyond its usual accommodation to the treasury. A considerable part of these advances consisted of remittances to foreign powers, and especially to the emperor of Germany; and being necessarily in coin, instead of promissory notes, greatly diminished the gold

CHAP. LIX.

1797.

Advances and state of the bank.

Correspondence between the bank and minister.

Alarms for public credit.

Fear of an invasion.

Unusual demand for specie.

Rapid decrease of

and silver of the kingdom. So early as 1795, the directors had strongly expressed to Mr. Pitt their expectations "that he would arrange his finances for the year in such a manner as not to depend on any farther assistance from the bank." They repeated their remonstrances at different periods in the same year; and, on the 8th of October, they concluded a written representation, by stating "the absolute necessity which they conceived to exist, for diminishing the sum of their present advances to government, the last having been granted with great reluctance on their part, on his pressing solicitations." In 1796, however, the urgency of Mr. Pitt representing the pressing demands of the public service, induced them to continue large accommodations to government. In the beginning of 1797, the minister requested farther advances; and also stated, that one million five hundred thousand pounds beyond the accommodation to the English treasury, would be wanted as a loan for Ireland. On the 9th of February, 1797, the directors ordered the governor to inform Mr. Pitt, "that, under the present state of the bank's accommodation to government here, to agree with his request of making a farther advance of 1,500,000*l.* as a loan to Ireland, would threaten ruin to the bank, and most probably bring the directors to shut up their doors."[f] But besides the remittance of specie, and the advance to government, another cause powerfully co-operated: the dread of invasion induced the farmers, and others resident in parts distant from the metropolis to withdraw their money from the hands of those bankers with whom it was deposited. The run, therefore, commenced upon the country banks, and the demand for specie soon reached the metropolis. From Monday the 20th of February, a great run began upon the bank,

[f] See Correspondence between Mr. Pitt and the Bank, Annual Register, 1797.

which

1797.

which increased the 21st, and still more rapidly on the Wednesday and Thursday. The bank was extremely alarmed. On the 24th, the drafts and demands of cash for bank notes were so numerous and large, that a deputation of the directors hastened to the chancellor of the exchequer, to state the amount of cash in hands and notes demandable by bearer; and also the drafts of the preceding and present day; and to ask him how far he thought the bank might venture to go on paying coin, and when he would think it necessary to interfere, before the cash was so reduced as might be detrimental to the immediate service. Government thought itself compelled to interpose; and, on the 26th of February, an order of the privy council was issued, prohibiting the directors of the bank from "issuing any cash in payment till the sense of parliament should be taken." This subject being announced to the respective houses, the opponents and the supporters of ministers formed totally different opinions of the amount of the actual case; the former construed the discontinuance of cash payments which the national repository was pledged to perform, into an inability to discharge its pecuniary engagements; under that impression, they declared the bank of England to be in a state of insolvency and bankruptcy: this opinion was founded in the usual definitions and practice of merchants, according to which, any individual or company that did not pay his or their own notes or acceptances, was certainly insolvent as long as the disability lasted, and bankrupt or not according to its permanency. The notes of the bank had been commonly considered merely as the representatives of gold and silver; and their convertibility into coin had been regarded by the people as the criterion of their value; and thence an obstruction to the readiness of their exchange for gold or silver, was esteemed a depreciation. Ministers considered the

cash in the bank.

The public agitation.

Application to government.

Order of council to suspend payments in cash.

The subject is discussed in parliament.

Opposition declare the bank to be in a state of insolvency, from the infatuation of ministers.

CHAP. LIX.

1797.

present as a case to be viewed on great and general principles, without being confined to the daily usage of ordinary stations: the present was not a question of definition, but of expediency and provision. The bank of England had been stated by its directors to possess, in its corporate property, effects infinitely beyond all the demands to which it was subject; but, from unfounded alarms, was not suffered to retain the usual quantity of gold and silver: they believed this statement to be true; and denied that if it was found so, the bank could be justly denominated insolvent and bankrupt. Money, whether in coin, metal, or any other material, was merely a medium of exchange, and an agreed representative of commodity: where there was abundance of effects, they would soon bring gold and silver, as well as other merchandise to market.[g] The first step to be taken was to ascertain the assets of the bank: for that purpose, a second committee was proposed, and appointed in both houses in the beginning of March. The result of the reports was, that on the 25th of February, the last day of paying gold and silver, there was a surplus of effects belonging to the bank, beyond the total debts, amounting to the sum of 3,826,890*l.* exclusive of a permanent debt of 11,666,800*l.* due from government; that the bank of England had lately experienced an universal drain of cash; that this drain was owing to drafts from the country, which arose from local alarms of invasion; that demands had been of late progressively increasing, but particularly in the last week; and that there was every reason to apprehend, that these demands, and the consequent progressive reduction of cash, would continue, and even increase, insomuch that if it were to proceed in the same proportion, the bank of England would be deprived of the means of supplying the cash which might be

Ministers allege, and the bank proves its property far to exceed its engagements.

[g] See Smith's Wealth of Nations, vol. i. passim.

necessary

1797.

necessary for pressing exigencies of public service." Grounded on these reports, Mr. Pitt proposed a bill, enabling the bank of England to issue notes in payment of demands upon them, instead of cash, agreeably to the late order of council to that effect: and after various discussions, and several modifications, the bill was passed into a law. This measure saved the credit of the bank, and of the public funds, which had been injured by the alarm; recalled to circulation the concealed hoards of the valuable metals, and made money of the various denominations much more plentiful than before. The predictions of the ablest men in opposition, that bank notes would soon be sold at a great discount, proved totally unfounded; and the interference of the privy council in the affairs of the bank, on the alarming disappearance of the precious metals, has from experience been demonstrated not only prudent, but indispensably necessary.

Bill to enable the bank to pay in notes instead of cash.

Scarcely had the public alarm from the bank subsided, when other imminent dangers occasioned dread and consternation. The soldiers and sailors of Britain had long complained of the smallness of their pay, as totally inadequate to their comfortable subsistence and accommodation, in the present diminished value of money: with these grievances, still unredressed, other causes co-operated to produce and disseminate discontents throughout the army and navy. The democratical doctrines of universal equality had been circulated by inflammatory agitators, but more especially in the navy: great numbers of political innovators entered themselves aboard the fleet; they knew the principal grievances in the estimation of sailors, to be severe punishment when aboard, and the want of means of pleasure when ashore: they, therefore, directed their animadversions to the harsh behaviour of several of the officers, and to the striking disproportion

Complaints of the sailors.

Artifices of disaffected agitators.

CHAP. LIX.

1797.

portion observed in the distribution of prize-money.[h] This inequality they represented not only as unjust, but as a proof of the contempt in which sailors were held by their officers; and yet it was evident, that, to the bravery of the seamen was principally owing the success in most engagements. The promoters of these doctrines conducted their inculcations and measures with such secrecy and sagacity, as shewed very considerable ability and skill: the means employed were dexterously and comprehensively fitted to the end proposed, — the incitement of a general mutiny through the fleet.[i] With so much address were their schemes conducted, that the existence of discontent was not suspected by the officers until mutiny was publicly announced. Several anonymous petitions in the month of March, were sent from the channel-fleet to lord Howe, begging his interference to procure such an increase of pay as would enable them in those dear times to support their families. Earl Howe, then at London, wrote to the commanding officer at Portsmouth, lord Bridport, to inquire whether there was any dissatisfaction. His lordship, after examining his officers, reported that there was none; and that it was merely an attempt of certain individuals to persuade government that the sailors disapproved of its conduct. The admiralty being informed by lord Howe of the petitions and inquiries, drew the same conclusion. But at this time it was settled by all the sailors of the channel fleet, that no ship should heave an anchor till a redress of grievances was obtained. On the 13th of April, lord Bridport ordered the signal for weighing anchor; which, instead of obeying, the sailors in the Queen Charlotte, lord Howe's own ship, set up three cheers, as the signal for commencing mutiny; and every other ship followed the example. The

Alarming mutiny at Portsmouth.

[h] See Annual Register, 1797.
[i] Ibid.

officers

officers exerted themselves to the utmost to recall the sailors to obedience; but their attempts were unavailing. The sailors were now supreme masters of the fleet; every crew appointed two delegates to form a convention, which should carry on its deliberations in lord Howe's own cabin. On the 17th, an oath was administered to every man in the fleet, to support the cause in which they had engaged: ropes were then reefed to the yard-arm in every ship, as the signal of punishment that would be inflicted on those that betrayed the cause; and several officers were sent ashore who were particularly obnoxious to their respective crews. Meanwhile, though the admiral could not lead his fleet to sea, both he and the officers were treated with the greatest respect and attention, and the whole routine of naval duties were regularly performed. On the 18th, two petitions, one to the admiralty, and the other to the house of commons, were drawn up, and signed by the delegates. The petition to the commons stated, in very respectful language and correct composition, the inadequacy of their pay (unchanged since the reign of Charles II.) to their subsistence in the present state of prices; and their inferiority in various articles to the soldiers. Their petition to the admiralty stated the low rate of their pay, and the insufficiency of their allowance of provisions; demanding an increase of both, together with the liberty of going ashore while in harbour; and the continuance of pay to wounded seamen, till they should be cured and discharged.

CHAP. LIX. 1797.

These proceedings so greatly alarmed government, that the lords of the admiralty went down to Portsmouth to inspect the transactions of the fleet themselves: finding the firm determination of the sailors to persist in their demands, and aware of the dreadful consequences that must ensue if the defenders of our country continued refractory, they

CHAP. LIX. 1797.

they authorised lord Bridport to inform the ship's company, that they would recommend to the king to propose to parliament an augmentation of their pay, and a redress of their other complaints. The delegates answered, that it was the determination of the crew, to agree to nothing that should not be sanctioned by parliament, and guaranteed by the king's proclamation. This declaration being made in a conference with several commanders, admiral Gardner was so irritated, that he seized one of the delegates by the collar, and swore he would have them all hanged, with every fifth man throughout the fleet. This conduct so much enraged the sailors, that the brave officer with difficulty escaped alive: the ships loaded their guns, and put themselves in a state of defence. The next day, however, they wrote a letter to the lords of the admiralty, stating the motives of their conduct on the preceding day; and another to lord Bridport, expressing for him personally the highest respect and attachment. On the 23d, his lordship pathetically addressing his crew, informed them that he had brought with him a redress of all their grievances, and the king's pardon for what had passed. These offers being communicated to the other crews, after some deliberation, were accepted, and every sailor returned to his duty. For a fortnight the fleet remained tranquil, expecting from parliament a confirmation of their demands, but finding no steps hitherto taken for that purpose, they renewed their former menaces. Alarmed at this intelligence, government sent to quell the tumult lord Howe, an officer universally beloved throughout the British fleet. This illustrious commander having pledged his word to the seamen that government would faithfully keep its promises, they declared their unlimited confidence in lord Howe's assurance, and returned to their duty. A mutinous disposition which had also appeared at Plymouth,

April 21st.

On the 17th of May.

Is quieted by lord Howe.

mouth, subsided upon hearing of these transactions at Portsmouth.

1797.

An augmentation of pay is granted by parliament.

PARLIAMENT now proceeded to consider the case of the seamen: Mr. Pitt proposed an augmentation, which was unanimously agreed to, as necessary both in justice and in policy; but Mr. Fox very strongly censured the procrastination of ministry, to which he imputed the renewal of the disturbances. It was hoped that these compliances of government, sanctioned by legislature, would have prevented any fresh tumults; but, a mutiny broke out at the Nore, on the 22d of May, much more outrageous and dangerous than the proceedings of the Portsmouth or Plymouth fleets. The sailors at the Nore blamed those of Portsmouth for having omitted to insist on a more equal distribution of prize-money. The crews took possession of their respective ships, chose delegates, stated their demands, including not only a much larger distribution of prize-money [k], but many privileges and exemptions from duty, which were totally inconsistent with the subordination of the navy, and objects of the service. At the head of this mutiny was a person named Richard Parker, a man of good abilities, not uneducated, a bold and resolute character. The lords of the admiralty directed admiral Buckner, the commanding officer at the Nore, to inform the seamen, that their demands were totally inconsistent with the good order and regulations necessary to be observed in the navy, and could not for that reason be complied with; but, that on returning to their duty, they would receive the king's pardon for their breach of obedience. To this offer Parker replied by a declaration, that the seamen had unanimously determined to keep possession of the fleet, until the lords of the admiralty should repair to the Nore and redress the grievances

More outrageous and dangerous mutiny at the Nore.

Parker.

[k] See Annual Register, 1797.

which

CHAP. LIX. 1797.

which they had stated. Meanwhile, on the 6th of June, the mutinous fleet was joined by four ships of the line, from the squadron which, under admiral Duncan, was watching the motions of the Dutch in the North sea. The lords of the admiralty hastened to Sheerness, and held a board, at which Parker and the other delegates attended: but their behaviour was so audacious, that the commissioners returned to town without the least success. Emboldened by the strength of men and shipping in their hands, and resolved to persevere in their demands till they should extort compliance, the mutineers proceeded to secure a sufficiency of provisions for that purpose, by seizing two vessels laden with stores, and sent notice ashore that they intended to block up the Thames, and cut off all communication between London and the sea, in order to force government to a speedy accession to their terms: they began the execution of their menace by mooring four of their vessels across the mouth of the river, and stopping several ships that were coming from the metropolis. While these transactions excited great alarm in the nation, they were violently reprobated by the seamen belonging to the two divisions of the fleet lying at Portsmouth and Plymouth: each of them addressed an admonition to their fellow-seamen at the Nore, warmly condemning their proceedings, as a scandal to the name of British sailors, and exhorting them to be content with the indulgence already granted by government, and to return to their duty without insisting on more concessions than had been demanded by the rest of the navy. These warnings proved ineffectual: the delegates commissioned lord Northesk, whom they had kept confined in the Montague which he commanded, to repair to the king in the name of the fleet, and to acquaint him with the conditions on which they were willing to deliver up the ships. The petition which he was charged

The insurgents block up the Thames.

Alarm in London.

CHAP. LIX.

1797.

charged to lay before the king, was highly respectful and loyal to his majesty, but very bitter against his ministers; and they required an entire compliance with every one of their demands, threatening, on the refusal of any, to put immediately to sea. Lord Northesk undertook to convey their petition; but told them, that, from the unreasonableness of its contents, he could not flatter them with the hope of success. No answer being returned to the message, and information being brought to the fleet that the nation at large highly disapproved of their proceedings, great divisions took place among the delegates, and several of the ships deserted the others; not, however, without much contest and bloodshed. The mutineers, despairing now of accomplishing their designs, struck their flag of mutiny: every ship was left at its own command, and they all gradually returned to obedience. Parker was seized and imprisoned, and after a solemn trial that lasted three days, on board the Neptune, he was sentenced to death. He suffered with great coolness and intrepidity, acknowledging the justice of his sentence. With him the other chief ringleaders, after a full proof of their guilt, were condemned and executed; but mercy, either immediately, or at a more distant period, was extended to the rest. This mutiny, so much more dangerous than the disturbances in the other fleets, attracted the very serious attention of parliament, to which it was communicated by a message from his majesty: measures were adopted for preventing communication between the well-affected and the present mutineers, and also precautions were employed to hinder and punish future attempts to seduce soldiers or sailors from their duty and allegiance, or to excite mutiny and sedition. With this view, Mr. Pitt proposed a bill, purporting, that persons who should endeavour to seduce

The sailors at length return to obedience.

Parker is tried and executed.

Law rendering the instigation

CHAP. LIX. 1797.

seduce either soldiers or sailors from their duty, or instigate them to mutinous practices, or commit any act of mutiny, or form any mutinous assemblies, should, on conviction, be deemed guilty of felony, and suffer death.[l] The duration of the act was limited to one month after the commencement of the next session; and the law, at the present crisis, was so evidently necessary that it passed by an unanimous vote. Having suppressed this insurrection of the sailors, government turned its attention to the army, which complained of the smallness of pay. An increase had been granted about two years before, and now a farther augmentation was established by which every soldier was to receive a shilling per day.

Of mutiny a capital felony.

State of Ireland.

GREAT discontents prevailed at this time in Ireland, which ministers imputed to the dissemination of jacobinical principles; and opposition to the system of government which had been adopted since the recall of earl Fitzwilliam. Ministers represented the country as having been almost in a state of rebellion: insurrection had been prevented by the firmness of government, and could be hindered in future only by a continuance of the vigorous measures which were now employed. The opponents of ministers denied that the Irish people were disposed to rebellion; and declared there existed great discontents, arising from the arbitrary, coercive, and unconstitutional system of the Irish government, tending to drive the people of Ireland to rebellion.[m] Earl Moira moved an address, praying his majesty's interference to allay the discontents in Ireland. The motion was resisted, first, as an interposition of the British legislature in Irish affairs, contrary to the independence

Lord Moira proposes an address on the subject to his majesty.

His motion is negatived.

[l] See Acts of Parliament, 1797.
[m] See Parliamentary Debates, 1797.

pendence of the Irish legislature; secondly, as mischievous, since it tended to render the Irish disaffected towards their own parliament and government, whose conduct was the most conducive to their welfare that could possibly be adopted. Motions of a similar nature were made in the house of commons, and rejected upon similar grounds. In supporting their respective propositions, Lord Moira and Mr. Fox reprobated the present system of administering Ireland, described the various classes and sects of men whom the system of terror tended to alienate, but especially the catholics in the south, and presbyterians in the north. The arguments however did not influence government, which continued to approve of a system that was styled by its supporters provident and wholesome firmness; by its opponents, violent and impolitic tyranny: but the full illustration of the grounds of these contrary opinions, will be found in the narrative of the Irish rebellion in the following year.

THE ministers, since the rupture of Lord Malmsbury's negociation, had greatly declined in popularity, and numerous petitions were presented to the king for their dismission. Induced by the calamitous events of the war, and encouraged by the sentiments which were now becoming prevalent, their opponents proposed, in both houses of parliament, addresses[n] to his majesty to remove from his councils his present servants. The grounds both of attack and defence were the same that had been so often discussed in many propositions, and various forms, and included the

Motions for the removal of ministers,

[n] The respective motions were made by the earl of Suffolk in the house of peers, March 27th; and by Mr. alderman Combe in the house of commons May 19th. The former limited his proposition to the dismissal of the first lord of the treasury; the latter included all the cabinet ministers. See Parliamentary Reports for 1797.

CHAP. LIX. 1797.

commencement and continuance of war; its conduct and events; the rupture of the negociation; the management of finance; the enormous addition of debt and taxes; and the distresses of the nation; with the replies often repeated. The motions were respectively rejected by both houses.

are negatived.

Motion for parliamentary reform.

MR. GREY, this season, renewed his propositions of parliamentary reform; and his scheme was more definite and explicit than at preceding periods: that the number of county members should be increased from ninety-two to a hundred and thirteen, eligible not only by freeholders but by copyholders and leaseholders; and that the other four hundred members should be chosen by all householders. The arguments for and against the proposition, were, with some new details and illustrations, the same that had been so repeatedly employed. Near the close of the session, a motion was made in the house of peers for an inquiry into the state of the nation; but opposed by ministers, as intended to produce a change of measures, which change they affirmed would be ruinous to the country.

Marriage of the princess royal.

IN the course of this session, Charlotte Matilda, the princess royal, a young lady of great beauty and accomplishments, and highly distinguished for ability, knowledge, and literary taste, was married to Frederic William, hereditary prince of Wirtemberg. On the 18th of May, the ceremony was performed by the archbishop of Canterbury, assisted by the archbishop of York, in presence of the royal family. Our sovereign gave the hand of his amiable and beloved daughter to her destined husband. The domestic sensibility of that affectionate and happy family, was very striking and impressive on an occasion that was to separate them from so dear a member: fraternal, sisterly, and, above all, parental feelings, when combined with

with the character and relations of the illustrious personages, rendered the scene at once solemn and pathetic. Her highness received a portion of eighty thousand pounds. Parliament rose the 20th of July, after having sitten between nine and ten months.

CHAP. LIX.

1797.

Parliament rises.

CHAP. LX.

Campaign of 1797. — *Operations in Italy — settlement of Italy — displays the political abilities of Bonaparte. — Address and versatility of Bonaparte — attempts to revolutionize the minds of the people. — He marches against the Austrians. — The archduke Charles is appointed general of the Austrians. — Formidable armies of the archduke and Bonaparte. — After successive victories, Bonaparte advances towards Vienna — Bonaparte offers peace to Austria — a negociation is opened. — Bonaparte changes the government of Venice — and of Genoa. — Treaty of Campo-Formio — iniquitous disposal of the territories of Venice. — Britain only remains to combat the ambition of France. — France proposes to overmatch our navy, exhaust our finances, and excite rebellion — mighty preparations in the ports of Spain, France, and Holland — and plan of the naval campaign. — Distribution and disposition of the British navy — admiral Jervis encounters a Spanish fleet of superior force off St. Vincent's — able and dexterous scheme for dividing the enemy's force — bold and masterly execution — decisive and important victory — totally disconcerts the plans of the enemy. — Powerful armament equipped by the Dutch — proposes to join the French at Brest — opposed by admiral Duncan — battle of Camperdown — Duncan, fearless of a lee-shore, breaks the enemy's line — the British fleet gains a most brilliant victory — admirals Jervis and Duncan are called to adorn the peerage. — This year, repeating the lesson of former wars, shews France and her allies the futility of contending with the navy of England. — Internal state of France — the royalists revive — alleged conspiracy — arrestation and banishment of the suspected persons without any proof. — New negociation for peace — lord Malmsbury sent to Lisle — propositions on the part of Britain — preliminary requisitions of France — farther demands — propose entire restitution without any equivalent. — Lord Malmsbury declares*

so unreasonable a proposition totally inadmissible — French temporise and pretend a disposition to modification — dilatory pretext of, until their internal changes were fixed — resume their proposition of restitution without any equivalent — Britain refuses such dishonourable conditions — lord Malmsbury ordered to depart. — The rupture of this negociation unquestionably owing to France. — Causes of the hostile disposition of France. — Discontents in Scotland — misapprehension of the militia bill — riots — alarming tumults in Perthshire — illustrating the operation of democratic principles — leaders fortunately ignorant, though daring — riots quelled.

CHAP. LX.

1797.

ENCOURAGED by the signal successes of the former year, the French republic made most powerful dispositions for commencing the campaign against Austria. The progress which she had effected by her land operations, she apprehended also enabled her to devote a considerable portion of her efforts against the maritime power of England. Having the direction of the navies of both Spain and Holland, her plan was to employ the united force of these countries with her own, in an attempt to deprive Britain of the dominion of the ocean, whilst her military energies continued to be exerted in extending the acquisitions of the former campaign. Italy had been the great scene of her military success, though not the sole field of her military glory. In that quarter the republic determined most strenuously to push her advantages, without invading Germany on the side of the Rhine. Bonaparte, having driven the Austrians from Italy, and quelled insurrection at Rome, before he resumed his pursuit of the enemy, devoted his attention to civil arrangements. He proposed to give the northern Italian states such strength as would eventually enable them, in dependence upon France, to sustain themselves against the attacks of Austria on the one side, or of Rome on the other. In the former year,

Campaign of 1797.

Operations in Italy.

Settlement of Italy, displays the political abilities of Bonaparte.

CHAP. LX.

1797.

a republican confederation had been framed under his auspices, composed of the four cities of Reggio[a], Modena, Bologna, and Ferrara, on the southern confines of the Po. This scheme he now extended, and formed two republics on the model of the French constitution; the Transpadane, consisting of the states on the north, and the Cispadane, of the states on the south, of the Po. The population of the countries on the north and south of the Po, that composed the two republics, was computed at upwards of four millions. This was amply adequate to their defence against their neighbours, without requiring the assistance of France, which would only be needed to protect them from the hostile designs of Austria; and thus they would soon be able to co-operate in resistance. The influence of France in Italy would henceforth be established on the surest foundation, the necessity of adhering faithfully to it by those states that depend on it for their preservation. In order to conciliate the minds of the people to republican institutions, Bonaparte carefully attended to those rules and manners which republicans adopt and value. He cautiously avoided all ostentation, and, in his personal demeanour, readily put himself on a footing of perfect equality with all persons of decent situations in society: hence he acquired a number of friends, not only among the French, but among the Italians, who had hitherto experienced little of that condescension, especially from the Germans, who seldom studied to make their authority acceptable among the natives.[b] One great purpose of his expedition was to revolutionize the minds of the Italians, the better to fit them for those changes in their various governments that

Address and versatility of Bonaparte.

He attempts to revolutionize the minds of the people.

[a] The geographical reader will recollect that there is another Reggio, much more noted, in the southern extremity of Italy (the ancient Rhegium). The Reggio, mentioned in the text, is a few leagues from Modena, nearer the Po.

[b] See Otridge's Annual Register for 1797, p. 21.

would

would assimilate them to the system of France. This end he completely attained, and established his influence very extensively in Italy. The solicitude he manifested, in effecting and consolidating the federal union between the republics, of which he had encouraged the foundation, more than any other circumstance, raised his fame and credit among the Italian politicians, who had long wished for the revival of such systems in their country, recollecting how much it had formerly flourished under their influence. Having completed his civil arrangements, Bonaparte now resumed military operations: he proposed to pursue the enemy in the Tyrol; to drive them before him to Vienna, and either to dictate peace, or capture the metropolis and overwhelm the power of Austria. Meanwhile the Austrians were making preparations, not for longer disputing the empire of Italy, but for defending their country. Animated by that generous and indignant patriotism which strains every nerve to resist foreign invaders, they made most formidable efforts to vindicate their independence, which they now conceived to be at stake. Generals of ability, skill, and reputation, the Austrians possessed; but as the first purpose was not to conduct armies, but to inspirit and invigorate the people, and to recruit the exhausted force, the primary consideration was, from their many capable generals, to select one in whom the nation reposed the greatest confidence. The conduct and successes of the archduke Charles, in compelling the republican armies to evacuate Germany, raised the public voice in his favour. All their other great commanders had been defeated; he alone was victorious: to render his appointment supremely popular, this single circumstance was sufficient. He was nominated commander in chief against Bonaparte, and all possible vigour and expedition were

He marches against the Austrians.

The archduke Charles is appointed general of the Austrians.

CHAP. LX. 1797.

employed in equipping an army adequate to the service. The patriotism, honour, and loyalty of the brave Germans, stimulated them to flock to the standard of the gallant young prince. [c] If this were to be their last effort in defending their country, they were resolved it should be an effort worthy of the Austrian glory. In the end of February, prince Charles took the field. Valiant and meritorious as this young commander was, yet unequally was he matched when placed opposite to Bonaparte. He brought enterprise and heroism to combat enterprise and military talents, supported by a victorious army, elated with success, and confident of future victory. The soldiers of the archduke were chiefly new raised, whereas Bonaparte commanded veterans. New troops, however valiant, engaged against a disciplined army, inspirited by enthusiasm, and so long accustomed to uninterrupted triumph, were and must be inferior. The archduke Charles was unequal to his opponent, because their respective forces were not equally habituated to war; commanding recruits against victorious veterans, the magnanimous youth found himself overmatched, like Hannibal in similar circumstances. After various conflicts, one battle was fought near Tarvis [d], in which the Austrians were completely and decisively defeated: a line of French armies, severally headed by Massena, Bernadotte, and Joubert, with the principal force under the immediate command of Bonaparte himself, extending from the Tyrolese mountains to Carniola, rapidly proceeded towards Vienna. The Austrians, repeatedly vanquished, renewed the contest; the republicans still advancing, reduced the strong fortresses of Carniola and Carinthia; and having entered Stiria, were within a hundred miles of the Austrian capital. Charles again made a stand at

Formidable armies of the archduke and Bonaparte.

After successive victories, Bonaparte advances towards Vienna.

[c] Annual Register, 1797, chap. ii.
[d] Annual Register, 1797, p. 26.

Hundmark,

1797.

Hundmark, upon the river Murh, but was again defeated: this last army by repeated losses being entirely broken, no means appeared to remain of defending Vienna, but by terminating the war. With some renowned heroes war appears to have been an end; with Bonaparte, war seemed only a means; and when triumphant, he uniformly professed to offer peace. After the last victory, he wrote a letter to the archduke Charles, expressing his desire of accommodating a contest, which was ruinous to the vanquished, and wasteful to the conquerors. "Brave soldiers made war, but desired peace: the war had now lasted six years; men enough had been slaughtered, and evils enough committed against suffering humanity." The archduke declared himself equally desirous of peace, and sent Bonaparte's letter to Vienna: a suspension of arms was appointed. One part of the consummate policy of Bonaparte, consisted in offering liberal terms to a vanquished enemy. With a view to secure permanent peace with the emperor; he proposed such conditions as might have even satisfied alternate victory; and a negociation was opened at Campo Formio.

Bonaparte offers peace to Austria.

A negociation is opened.

Whilst this treaty was pending, Bonaparte directed his views to the situation and conduct of Venice[e]; which republic had long viewed with dissatisfaction the victorious progress of the French in Italy. The house of Austria, though at all times formidable, had never been an object of terror to Venice, not even when it united Spain and Germany in the same family. The turbulent and restless disposition of the French, and their propensity to democratical innovation, alarmed the Venetian aristocracy, which feared that the changes might extend to the subversion of their authority: they took no open share in the contest, but they favoured

Bonaparte changes the government of Venice.

[e] Annual Register, 1797, chap. iii.

the

CHAP. LX.

1797.

the imperialists, and rendered them as much service as they could without avowing hostilities against their adversaries. Bonaparte was far advanced into Austria, and reports were spread that the French army had been drawn into a defile, and were about to capitulate: the Venetians believing this rumour, in an evil hour sent a large army of their desultory troops to attack the posts which Bonaparte had left in Italy. In executing these orders, the Venetians massacred the French wherever they were to be found. Being informed of the outrages, Bonaparte ordered a great body of troops to march into the Venetian territories. The republicans easily defeated such opponents; and, on the 16th of May, took possession of the city of Venice. Bonaparte established a new government on the French model, instead of the aristocracy which had lasted for so many centuries, and acquired such eminence among European nations: he also compelled them to pay a contribution amounting to upwards of three millions sterling.

and of Genoa.

In Genoa also the nobles were friendly to the Austrian cause, but the people were attached to the French, and desirous of a popular government: Bonaparte, soon after the revolution of Venice, established a democratical government in Genoa; but as the nobles had never been active in hostility, and did not oppose the change, they escaped exactions. Meanwhile, the negociation at Campo Formio was proceeding, the preliminaries were signed in the month of July, and the definitive treaty on the 17th of October.[f]

Treaty of Campo Formio.

By the peace of Campo Formio, the emperor ceded in full sovereignty to the French republic, the whole of the Austrian Netherlands; and consented to their remaining in possession of the Venetian islands of Corfu and Zante, Cephalonia, and

[f] See State Papers, Oct. 17th, 1797.

all

CHAP. LX.

1797.

all their other isles in the Adriatic, together with their settlements in Albania, situated in the south-east of the gulph of Lodrino: he acknowledged the republic, newly constituted under the name Cisalpine, to be an independent state; he ceded to it the sovereignty of the countries that had belonged to Austrian Lombardy, and consented to its possessing the cities and territories of Bergamo, Brescia, and others, late the dependencies of Venice; together with the duchies of Mantua and Modena; the principalities of Massa and Carrara; and the cities and territories of Bologna, Ferrara, and Romagna, lately belonging to the pope. The cessions of the French republic to the emperor were Istria, Dalmatia, with all the Venetian islands in the Adriatic, lying to the north-west of the gulph of Lodrino, the city of Venice, with a large portion of the dominions of that republic, chiefly those lying between the Tyrol, the Lake of Guarda, and the Adriatic. Besides these public articles, there was a secret convention, by which it appears the dismemberment of the Venetian territories was determined, and the emperor was to compensate his losses in the Netherlands by the iniquitous seizure of dominions before independent. Here, indeed, the emperor chose for his model his neighbours of Russia and Prussia.

Iniquitous disposal of the territories of Venice.

One enemy now only remained to oppose the victorious career of the French republic, but that was the most formidable that they did or could encounter. Having now at their command the navy of Spain as well as that of Holland, the French government proposed to combat Britain upon her own element: naval warfare, however, was only a part of their intended hostilities. Their objects in their contest with England were principally three; to overmatch our navy, exhaust our finances, and excite rebellion. In the earlier part of 1797, the circumstances of England appeared

Britain only remains to combat the ambition of France.

France proposes to overmatch our navy, exhaust our finances, and excite rebellion.

CHAP. LX.

1797.

peared favourable to the realization of these hopes: the bank was, as we have seen, represented by very eminent senators as insolvent; the sailors were mutinous, and great discontents prevailed, especially in Ireland. Immense preparations were made in the ports of Spain and Holland. The French plan of the naval campaign was, that the greater part of the Spanish navy should be formed into one armada, sail early in the spring to Brest, join the French ships, meet a powerful Dutch fleet, and bear down upon England with more than seventy sail of the line. As it was the policy of France to effect a junction of the three naval armaments, so it was the policy of England to keep them separate. Admiral Duncan was appointed to watch the motions of the Dutch in the Texel, and sir John Jervis to intercept the Spaniards on their own coast; the Spanish fleet consisted of six ships of a hundred and twelve guns, one of a hundred and thirty-two, reckoned the largest vessel in Europe; two of eighty-four, and eighteen of seventy-four guns: the squadron destined to oppose this armada, amounted to fifteen ships of the line and some frigates. On the 14th of February, cruizing off Cape St. Vincent, Jervis descried the hostile fleet; so inferior in force, the British admiral saw that his policy was to divide the enemy: rapid in executing as well as wise and bold in planning, he formed his line with wonderful dispatch, passed through the Spanish fleet, separated one-third of it from the main body, and by a vigorous cannonade compelled it to remain to leeward, and prevented its junction with the centre till the evening. After having thus broken through the enemy's line, and, by this daring and fortunate measure, diminished his force from twenty-seven ships to eighteen, he perceived that the Spanish admiral, in order to recover his superiority, was endeavouring to rejoin the ships separated from him,

Mighty preparations in the ports of Spain, France, and Holland, and plan of the naval campaign.

Distribution and disposition of the British navy.

Admiral Jervis encounters a Spanish fleet of superior force off St. Vincent's.

Able scheme for dividing the enemy's force.

him, by wearing round the rear of the British lines; but commodore Nelson, who was in the rearmost ship, directly wore, and by standing towards him prevented his design. He had now to encounter the Spanish admiral of one hundred and thirty-two guns, aided by two others, each of them three-deckers: he was happily relieved from this dangerous position by the coming up of two ships to his assistance, which detained the Spanish admiral and his seconds, till he was attacked by four other British ships; when, finding that he could not execute his design, he made the signal for the remainder of his fleet to form together for their defence. The British admiral, before they could get into their stations, directed the rearmost of them, some of which were entangled with others, to be attacked, and four were captured. In the meantime, that part of the Spanish fleet which had been separated from its main body had nearly rejoined it, with four other ships, two of which were not in the engagement: this was a strength more than equal to that which remained of the British squadron, fit, after so severe a contest, for a fresh action. The Spaniards, however, would not adventure to face the British force in close battle, and retreated. The victorious squadron of Britain carried off the four captured vessels, two of them bearing one hundred and twelve guns, one eighty four, and the other seventy-four. The slain and wounded on board of these, before they struck, amounted to six hundred; and on board of the British squadron to half that number: the killed and wounded on board the other Spanish ships were also computed to amount[s] to about six hundred. The vanquished fleet withdrew to Cadiz, whither it was immediately followed by the victors, who blocked it up in so close a manner, that not one of the numerous ships of force belonging to

CHAP. LX.

1797.

bold and masterly execution:

decisive and important victory.

[s] See London Gazette Extraordinary, for March 3d, 1797.

Spain

CHAP. LX. 1797.

Spain in that capacious harbour durst venture out beyond the reach of the many powerful batteries that were erected for its defence. There the British squadron commanded the seas, and took many prizes. Various attempts were made to bombard Cadiz, under the immediate direction of commodore Nelson, and in one of them great execution was done. Thus the victory of Jervis entirely disconcerted the plan of the three allied powers.

Totally disconcert the plans of the enemy.

Powerful armament equipped by the Dutch; propose to join the French at Brest:

THE Dutch made mighty preparations, with a view, it was supposed of joining the Brest fleet, and invading Ireland; but, the vigilance of admiral Duncan rendered it impracticable for them to venture out of port without risking an engagement. A violent storm having arisen about the autumnal equinox, obliged Duncan to return to Yarmouth to repair his ships: the Batavian government ordered admiral De Winter to sail with all possible expedition, hoping they might proceed so far on their way to Brest that it would be impracticable for Duncan to prevent their junction with the French fleet: but they soon found it would be impossible to elude the vigilance of our admiral.

is opposed by admiral Duncan.

Apprised by the signals of his advanced cruizers that the Dutch fleet had left the Texel, Duncan, on the 10th of October, sailed from Yarmouth roads: reaching the coast of Holland late in the evening, he stationed his squadron so as to prevent the enemy from regaining the Texel. On the 11th of October, early in the morning, he descried the Dutch fleet formed in a line of battle, about nine miles to leeward between Egmont and Camperdown. To prevent them from approaching nearer the shore, Duncan resolved to break their line: this movement he speedily executed, and, about twelve o'clock, a close action began[n], wherein admiral Duncan's division attacked the van of the

Battle of Camperdown.

Duncan fearless of a lee-shore, breaks the enemy's line.

[n] See London Gazette Extraordinary, Oct. 16th, 1797.

Dutch,

CHAP. LX. 1797.

Dutch, and admiral Onslow the rear. The ship mounted by Duncan lay nearly three hours alongside of the Dutch admiral De Winter, and the conflict between these two brave commanders was remarkably obstinate and destructive. The latter did not strike his flag till all his masts were overboard, half of his crew were slain or wounded, and it was utterly impossible to make any more resistance. The Dutch vice-admiral yielded to admiral Onslow, after he had been reduced to the same condition; and all the Dutch ships that struck had defended themselves with equal bravery, being almost every one totally disabled. About four in the afternoon the battle terminated in a decisive victory to British valour and British skill. Our fleet, by this time, was within five miles of the shore, and in no more than five fathoms water; so that the admiral's chief care now was to prevent his victorious fleet from being entangled in the shallows. This necessary precaution, and the approach of night, compelled him to discontinue the pursuit, which saved a remnant of the enemy's fleet: no fewer, however, were captured than eight ships of the line, two of fifty-six guns, and two frigates. The loss of men, on both sides, in this bloody and well-fought battle, was very great: in the British squadron it amounted to seven hundred; but in the Dutch, to twice that number; and they were the choicest of their seamen. Naval critics impute this victory to the united boldness and judgment which carried the British fleet between the enemy and the shore. It is indeed an instance of a position which the series of facts in this history illustrates, that, TO BRITAIN ENGAGED IN WAR, THE MOST ADVENTUROUS COURAGE IS THE WISEST POLICY. This grand victory entirely overturned the naval projects of France. The two illustrious admirals, who in their respective stations broke the maritime power by which France

The British fleet gains a most brilliant victory.

Admirals Jervis and Duncan are called to adorn the peerage.

CHAP. LX.

1797.

France had expected to invade and annoy England, besides the praise and gratitude of the nation, received the honour of the peerage, with the titles taken from the scenes of their respective victories; Jervis was created earl St. Vincent, and Duncan viscount Duncan of Camperdown. These were the chief naval transactions of a year, that so strongly repeated the lesson of former wars, that France or her auxiliaries waste their efforts in seeking to humble the navy of England.

This year, repeating the lesson of former wars, shews France and her allies the futility of contending with the navy of England.

Internal state of France.

The royalists revive.

DURING this year, great internal dissension manifested itself in France; the royalists were becoming so powerful, as to rouze the jealousy and apprehension of the republicans. At a new election of the national councils, a considerable proportion of members friendly to royalty, was returned; among these were Pichegru with his friends and adherents. Bonaparte, on the other hand, though at a distance from Paris, was the strenuous supporter of directorial government. Angereau, one of his generals, a brave and enterprizing officer, and beloved by the soldiers, undertook to support the directorial leaders in their attempts to crush the royalists. Having concerted measures for striking a decisive blow, Barras, Reubel, and Lareveillere, three of the directors, entrusted Angereau to repair to the national council, and arrest sixty of the deputies whom they charged with conspiracy for re-establishing royalty. Among the accomplices they included Carnot and Barthelemi, the two remaining directors. Angereau executed his commission on the 4th of September, with the most summary and decisive expedition: the specified deputies were arrested, and also Barthelemi; Carnot made his escape. The directory published addresses to the French people, declaring that this arrestment was necessary to the salvation of the republic. As a great majority of the people was attached to a republican

Alleged conspiracy.

Arrestation and banishment of the suspected persons, without a proof.

can form of constitution, they were easily persuaded that the conduct of the directors was right and expedient. The directors having ascertained their superiority and present stability, professed themselves disposed to lenient punishment, and that they would not suffer any blood to be spilt; but that the chief conspirators should be transported. In opposition to these professions of mercy, it was answered, that the directory grossly transgressed the first principles of justice; that the alleged conspirators were never tried; and that instead of a free constitution, the government was an arbitrary oligarchy, rendering the property, liberty, and life of every Frenchman dependent on the directors, and the army which was at their devotion.

New negociation for peace.

MEANWHILE, attempts were made by the British government to renew the negociation for peace: an official note, dated the 1st of June, was sent to the French minister for foreign affairs, intimating a willingness to enter into a negotiation for the re-establishment of peace, and for the regulation of preliminaries, to be definitively arranged at a future congress. The answer of the directory expressed an equal disposition to pacific measures; but signified, at the same time, a desire that negotiations should at once be set on foot for a definitive treaty. The directory was anxiously intent upon giving the law to England, as it had done to other countries, and was desirous, for that purpose, to remove all obstructions that must have arisen from a junction of the common interests of its allies together with its own. In transmitting the passports for the expected minister, they specified that he was to be furnished with full power, to negotiate a definitive and separate treaty. As the republican party and the army were paramount in France, the government depending upon their support for its own stability and power, it was necessary in conducting the negotiation to regard the opinion and sentiments

CHAP. LX. 1797.

ments of both. The republicans were solicitous that no concessions should be made favourable to the interests of royalty or its partisans, either in France, or even its proximity. The soldiers and officers were no less anxious, that the vast acquisitions made by their valour should be retained; and, that after so many victories, the fruits of their exploits should not be relinquished. Neither disposed nor able to thwart these inclinations, and guided by similar sentiments, the directory sent their minister to meet lord Malmsbury, at Lisle. The British ambassador proposed the plan of pacification which his constituents had formed. This scheme demanded from Spain a cession of the island of Trinidad; and from the Batavian republic a cession of the cape of Good Hope, Cochin in the East Indies, and its possessions in Ceylon. On these conditions, an entire restitution would be made, on the part of Great Britain, of all that it had taken from France and its allies, in the course of the war. It required that the prince of Orange's property should be restored to him, or an equivalent in money be allowed; and that France should engage to procure for him at the general peace, a compensation for the loss of his offices and dignities in the United Provinces. The queen of Portugal should also be included in this treaty, without being subjected to demands of any kind. On the part of France, the minister required as preliminaries to any treaty, first, a full and unequivocal recognition of the French republic; secondly, that the king of Great Britain should henceforward desist from assuming the title of king of France; monarchy having been totally abolished by the French, they could no longer permit any claim, though merely nominal and inconsequential, to remain in the possession of any prince; and therefore expected and required that it should be relinquished by the British monarchs in future; thirdly, that the ships

Lord Malmsbury is sent to Lisle.

Proposition on the part of Britain.

Preliminary requisition of France.

taken by the English at Toulon should be restored, or an equivalent for them, and those that had been destroyed. The French republic was acknowledged in the addresses of the British ambassador to its plenipotentiary.[1] The renunciation of the title of king of France, lord Malmsbury deemed a claim hardly worthy of serious reasoning. The demand of the restitution of the captured ships, was a matter of real importance; he, therefore, by the instructions of his court, forbore giving any decisive answer, until the French should state their propositions, or, in diplomatic language, their *contre project*. The French note stated another preliminary, more important and comprehensive than any of the former; that England should engage to make an entire restitution of all the possessions it had taken, not only from France, but from Spain and the Batavian republic: they required the ambassador to accede to this proposal, and if already not sufficiently authorised, to dispatch a messenger to the British court, in order to procure the necessary powers. The argument on which they founded this peremptory requisition was, that the treaties between France and its Spanish and Batavian allies respectively guaranteed to each other the territories they possessed previously to the war. Lord Malmsbury declared such an imperious and unqualified demand must speedily break the negotiation, as it proposed cession on the one side, without any compensation on the other: if this were the resolution of the directory, the negotiation was at an end; and it only remained for Great Britain to persevere in maintaining, with an energy and spirit proportioned to the exigency, a war that could not be ended but by yielding to such disgraceful terms. The French ministers hinted, that some modification might be devised, and professed

CHAP. LX. 1797.

Farther demands.

The French propose restitution, without any equivalent.

Lord Malmsbury declares so unreasonable a proposition totally inadmissible.

The French temporise, and pretend

[1] See successive State Papers between lord Malmsbury and the French Ministers, at Lisle, in July, August, and September, 1797.

CHAP. LX.

1797.

to apply to the directory for fresh instructions. The whole month of August passed without any decisive answer from France: the republican negotiators, in frequent conference with lord Malmsbury, intimated that the directory was endeavouring to dispose its allies to terms more consonant to the views of England. Lord Malmsbury was fully aware that these pretences were totally unfounded, and that both Spain and Holland were driven to hostilities by the power of France, and were desirous of peace: nevertheless, he yet continued to wait a positive answer. For a fortnight more the procrastination continued: meanwhile the republican party completely accomplished their purpose of subjugating their adversaries; and immediately after the revolution of the 4th of September, new ambassadors were appointed to negotiate with lord Malmsbury. These ministers, after some prefatory professions of the desire of the French government for peace, peremptorily repeated the impracticability of a negotiation, except on the principle of complete restitution on the part of Britain, without any compensation.[k] Finding Britain, in the plenitude of power and resources, would not accede to such dishonourable conditions, the French government ordered lord Malmsbury to depart from Lisle. Whether the rupture of the first negociation is imputable to Britain or France, is a subject which admits of such very strong arguments on both sides[l], that the impartial historian, satisfied with stating the facts, will not rashly give judgment; it was indeed a question of prudence, balancing probabilities, was, or was not the retention of Belgium by France so important as to counterpoise the miseries of war? If it was, were our means of compelling its restitution such as to render

a disposition to modification.

Dilatory pretexts of, until their internal changes are fixed.

Resume, their proposition of restitution without any equivalent.

Britain refusing such dishonourable conditions, lord Malmsbury is ordered to depart.

The rupture of this negociation is unquestionably owing to France.

[k] See in State Papers, 1797, the notes and conferences between the respective ambassadors, from the 15th of September to the 1st of October, 1797.

[l] See Erskine on the causes and consequences of war, and answer by John Giffard, Esq. also, answer by John Bowles, Esq.

render success likely? In the second negociation, we were not merely called to acquiesce in possessions acquired by the French, and which it would be evidently difficult to extort from them by force; but to relinquish, without a compensation, our acquisitions, which they could not extort from us by force. Here the historian may safely give judgment, that the hostile conclusion of the second negociation arose from the French republic. We have uniformly seen that peace is the permanent interest of the two first nations of the world; and that every war has left both the conquered and the conqueror in a worse situation than they would have been if no contest had arisen: national rivalry unfortunately produced animosity and enmity, and overwhelmed all views of mutual and reciprocal interest. This hostility had been strongly inflamed by the events of the present war. Irresistibly triumphant over all other enemies, France had experienced the most powerful and effectual opposition from England: not only resentment, nor even ambition, but pride stimulated her to show herself superior in combat to England as well as to the rest of the world. Republican energy inspiring and invigorating immense military force, afforded, she conceived, the means of humbling, or even subjugating, her most formidable and potent rival. Their recent victory over interior adversaries enabled the government to employ its spirit, resources, and instruments, without interruption, against the only enemy which the total dissolution of the coalition had now left. These inclinations were cherished by their most brilliant and captivating orators: England was represented as another Carthage, long paramount in opulence, and in power resting upon that opulence; but which France, as another Rome, would overwhelm by superiority of military strength. These sentiments and ideas impressed in both the government and

CHAP. LX. 1797.

Causes of the hostile disposition in France.

CHAP. LX.

1797.

the nation, contributed powerfully to the dismissal of lord Malmsbury, and to the persistance in war with England.

Discontents in Scotland.

THE spirit of discontent which had existed both in England and in Scotland, with a fluctuation of increase and decrease ever since the first diffusion of the revolutionary doctrines, this year was in Scotland brought into alarming action, by a misconception of the militia act; misrepresented by Jacobin demagogues, many of the ignorant peasants appear to have considered it as a press act, compelling the persons drawn to become soldiers. Various partial tumults arose in the manufacturing towns as well as agricultural villages and districts in the low countries of Scotland, and were not suppressed without the intervention of military force. These, however possessing neither unity of design nor system, were without much difficulty quelled through the vigilance of the magistrates, aided by military activity. In more sequestered districts, where soldiers were rarely stationed, tumult, and indeed insurrection, rose to such a height as to overpower the civil magistrates, and, for a time, to suspend all regular government. In the highlands of Perthshire, on the banks of the Tay and its tributary rivers, and in the adjacent glens and fastnesses of the Grampians, the common people were remarkable for industry, sobriety, and other virtues[m] that render this useful station respectable; pious and attentive to the essential duties of religion, without the puritanical fanaticism of some of the adjacent districts. They were characteristically respectful to the higher ranks; in some cases even to the submissiveness of feudal ideas, and beyond the necessary subordination of regular liberty. As, however, they advanced in civilization and knowledge, agricultural skill, successfully exerted, in various

Misapprehension of the militia act.

Riots.

Alarming tumults in Perthshire.

[m] See Statistical Accounts of the parishes of Blair, Moulin, Logierait, Little Dunkeld, Weem, Dull, and Fortingal.

instances

instances produced independence of situation; independence of sentiment began to follow; and, about the commencement of the French revolution, they had reached a very proper medium between servility and arrogance, and were what British peasants may always be wished to continue. Intelligent and inquisitive, they were anxiously desirous to know the state of public affairs: newspapers found their way into those recesses, and they became extremely interested in the transactions of the continent.[n] When the contest seemed to be between the mass of the people and their former lords, their minds, being alive to such discussions, were the more easily impressed by the works of Thomas Paine, which were studiously spread among them, as well as the rest of our countrymen. At first they did not clearly apprehend what benefits "The Rights of Man," held forth; but understood its scope in general to be the redress of all grievances under which they might fancy themselves to labour.[o] Those highlanders were, in most respects, contented with their lot, and, for several years, were not driven to dissatisfaction, though they gradually relaxed in deference to their lay superiors, and also to their clergy, whom they had hitherto regarded with peculiar veneration. The country not affording provision for all its natives, many of these migrate to more productive districts, whence some of them returning to visit the habitations of their fathers, bring back with them the ideas of their new residence. Hence principles and doctrines of Glasgow and of Paisley found their way to Athol. Somewhat before this time, two noted agitators, named Menzies and Cameron, having returned to the Highlands from the chief

Causes and instigators.

[n] See Statistical Account of Little Dunkeld by Mr. John Robertson, clergyman of the parish, written in 1792.

[o] They first conceived that Tom Paine was to put an end to *Excisemen*, whose office, enhancing the price of the favourite beverage, whiskey, is peculiarly unpopular.

CHAP. LX.

1797.

scenes of Scotch conventionalists, pitched their abode in a populous part of the districts in question; there they actively disseminated the revolutionary ideas, and made very great progress among their countrymen; and, by the beginning of 1797, had succeeded in inclining the people to dislike the constituted authorities, and to wish for a revolution: but though these fellows were laying the train, matters did not appear fit for lighting the match. Such was the state of things when the report of the militia act reached the country, together with very exaggerated accounts of the resistance of the people in the south. About the 1st of September, the populace were all in a ferment, and then only did the gentlemen receive any intimation of the spirit that was predominant. In two days the country was a scene of tumult, and even insurrection: the mob visited the house of every magistrate, clergyman[p], or other gentleman of respectability, and proffered them oaths and engagements to join in opposing the militia act; but such still was the influence of habitual ideas, that they drew up those compulsory stipulations *on the stamps required by the law for legalizing agreements:* in their violation of all law, they rendered homage to the conventional and social securities which law establishes. The mob threatened recusants with the destruction of their houses; and, to shew themselves prepared for conflagration, carried with them fire and combustibles; and the watch-word, which they roared with infuriate yell as they approached the seats of gentlemen, was "straw and burning coals!" Most of the gentlemen, to preserve their property, yielded to the mandates of the mob, and professed to incur obli-

[p] Their treatment of one clergyman of the most estimable character, advanced in years, brought on an illness that terminated in his death, long before the previous vigour of his constitution taught his friends to expect his decease.

gations

gations that could not be binding, and there being no military force, did not attempt a resistance, which, if the insurgents were resolute, must have certainly proved destructive: a few argued with some reason, that persons so new to riot and outrage could not immediately proceed to atrocity; they therefore refused to make a promise which they did not intend to perform; and some gentlemen made very vigorous dispositions for defence. The event demonstrated that, in the precise circumstances of the case, repugnance was the most effectual; resolute refusal was followed by no outrage, whereas concession to lawless demands produced some violence, and much insult. As the insurgents proceeded, they assumed a considerable degree of organization; the respective rioters, in their operations, changed districts, so as to be less easily recognized, should order return, and judicial inquiry be instituted. The first exercise of the legislative functions with which they had invested themselves, they proposed to be the annihilation of three classes of men, clergymen, lairds (landholders), and excisemen, and thus to commence revolution by the abolition of religion and revenue, and the confiscation of property.[q] Fortunately for the peace of the country, their leaders, though active and daring, were not able; and prematurely exulting in success, through their own security, were the more easily surprised and arrested in a career which was hurrying on to rebellion.

Revolutionary objects.

The chief person in that part of Scotland, from rank, fortune, and his official situation as lord lieutenant of the county, was the duke of Athol: his house was in considerable danger, but was preserved by a mixture of prudence and resolution, the most efficacious that could be employed in encoun-

[q] The reader, by recurring to vol. iv. p. 221. will see a striking resemblance between the objects of the French peasants in 1789, and these highlanders in 1797.

tering

CHAP. LX.

1797.

tering a mob that was furious in violence, without being desperate in atrocity. The rioters had advanced to a park wall that separates the public road from a lawn before Athol house, and urged their demands in a tone of imperious dictation. The duke explained to them their misconception of the act, calmly expostulated with them on their conduct, and advised them to return to the occupations of the season. Many of his hearers were disposed to listen to this salutary advice, but others, more outrageous, would persevere; and some of them threatened to break into the grounds, and set the house on fire. Lord Henry Murray, brother to the duke, agreeably to the prompt execution of military procedure, proposed an immediate attack upon the insurgents, with the servants, adherents, and guests of the family, and a small party of light-horse that was at hand: but his grace was averse to a measure which must have produced the effusion of blood, and might drive the populace to desperation. Finding them about to enter the grounds, he gave directions to load and point cannon that were placed in the lawn for festive occasions, with all the arms of his house to be in readiness; with much danger to himself, he walked to the paling, and told the rioters that, if one of them entered his grounds, he would order a general fire. Finding them intimidated by his resolution, he, after some time, resumed a milder strain, and appealed to feelings which, though suspended, he knew were not yet extinguished; and at length they departed, though not without leaving an apprehension that they might be brought back by Menzies and Cameron, who were believed to intend coming to the same place the following day, with a very large body, from an equally populous district as Athol; and the next was expected to be a very critical day: but the prompt measures which were contrived or adopted by his grace, disconcerted the insurgents.

The

The ringleaders, apprehending no interruption from government, passed the night at their respective habitations with as confident security as if they had returned to enjoy repose after the fatigue of lawful business. The direct roads between their mansions and the station of any military force, were all either possessed or observed by their friends and votaries. The duke, aware of this circumstance, sent the light horse, not above twelve in number, by a circuitous route across the mountains; which, not being suspected, he naturally conceived would not be watched. The party, with professional expedition, arrived, before day-break, at the place of their destination, seized the fellows, and escorted them in a chaise along the road to Edinburgh. The intelligence spread instantaneously through the country, where the people were before hastening to the places of rendezvous. And here I cannot avoid mentioning a circumstance which shews how naturally men, totally unacquainted with military occupations, adopt the schemes of soldiers in circumstances that appear to them to require force, either for defence or aggression. The object of the populace was to rescue the ringleaders: expresses were dispatched to have the defiles seized, so that smaller bodies might detain the convoy until the great mass of the people should arrive. The different passes were beset with a skill worthy of regular soldiers; and though the insurgents could not obstruct, they considerably retarded the dragoons, who were unwilling to proceed to extremities as long as they could be avoided. The mob, with considerable judgment, spent no more time at smaller defiles in opposing the escort, than to enable great numbers to press forward to that on which they fixed as the chief position of resistance. This was a bridge over the Bran, a rapid river that falls into the Tay, that may be considered as one of the entrances to the ghauts of the Grampians.

There

CHAP. LX. 1797.

There the insurgents, besetting the bridge, seized the horses of the carriage. The mob were many thousands in number: the commander used every peaceable effort in his power to persuade the populace to let the party pass without opposition; but finding all unavailing, he ordered his men to form for a charge. The rioters seeing the swords drawn and ready for action, and being hitherto the votaries of speculative error rather than of practical guilt, as much awed by the crisis that must begin bloodshed and rebellion as intimidated by the danger, suffered the carriage to pass on, and to proceed to the seat of justice. The ringleaders being seized, the misguided peasants returned by degrees to their usual occupations. This insurrection caused a dreadful alarm, not only in the scene of its operation, but throughout Perthshire and the neighbouring counties. Though being quelled in a short time, it was less memorable in event than at one time it threatened, yet it appears to me sufficiently important to deserve historical record: it illustrates the close connection between levelling doctrines and revolutionary attempts. It farther proves that, in tumults which arise from mischievous error rather than criminal intention, implicit concession is far from being the most effectual policy; submission to even absurd claims of the ignorant, instead of giving satisfaction, encourages still more unreasonable demands. To meet such insurgents, the most successful means were, a prudent moderation that did not uselessly exasperate passion already violent, and a resolute firmness that would not yield to insolent and lawless demand. In individual cases the concessions might be necessary, but it was firmness that proved effectual to the public tranquillity. Menzies and Cameron were carried over to Edinburgh, to be tried by the justiciary court; but, by some unaccountable

countable neglect, they were suffered to fly from prison, and thus escaped the punishment which, as there was abundance of evidence, they must have unquestionably incurred.[r]

[r] I have derived the materials for this part of the narrative from various gentlemen who resided in Athol at the time; and, among others, from my own father, the clergyman to whom I have alluded in the preceding note.

CHAP. LXI.

State of public opinions and sentiments at the meeting of parliament: — Effects of British victories, and the haughty conduct of France. — Discontent is much less prevalent than in former years — the nation regards the continuance of war as unavoidable, and bravely resolve to meet the exigency — the king publicly states the progress and rupture of the negociation — the nation in general is disposed to support government. — Meeting of parliament — encouraged by the public sentiment, the minister adopts a new scheme of finance — he proposes to alleviate the funding system by raising a great part of the supplies within the year — and projects a multiplication of assessed taxes, which he presumes to be a criterion of income — details — arguments against and for — voluntary contributions proposed by Mr. Addington — the finance scheme is passed into a law — liberal contributions of all ranks and conditions — redemption of the land-tax — object to absorb a large quantity of funded stock — plan of national defence introduced by Mr. Dundas — voluntary associations — the whole nation becomes armed against foreign and domestic enemies — revival of the alien bill — apprehensions of an invasion — motion of the duke of Bedford for the removal of ministers — is negatived — prorogation of parliament. — Rebellion in Ireland — treatment of Ireland from the latter years of the American war — the penal statute against Catholics repealed — the Catholics desire a participation of political privileges, which is refused — effects of the French revolution — united Irishmen — Wolfe Tone — professed objects, reform in parliament and Catholic emancipation — real object — progress of — counter association of Orange-men — catholic defenders — French mission to Ireland — proposed plan of insurrection to facilitate a French invasion — apprehension of Jackson, and discoveries through him — hopes of the Catholics from the appointment of lord Fitzwilliam — consequences of his recall

recall — farther progress of the united Irishmen — they send ambassadors to France — vigilance of the British government — martial law is proclaimed — mission of Macnevin to France — his proposed scheme of military operations — the whig party propose conciliatory measures — which are rejected as inapplicable to the case — proclamations and proffers of pardon — are totally disregarded — the united Irishmen concert measures for a general insurrection — disappointed by Duncan's defeat of the Dutch fleet — want of concert between the Irish conspirators and the French republic — arrestation of the delegates — hurries on rebellion before their designs were ripe — rebellion — insurgents near Dublin — are subdued — alarming insurrection in Wexford — successes of — at length are defeated — rebellion is suppressed in the south — insurrection in the north — advances, but is subdued — lord Camden desires to be recalled — marquis Cornwallis is appointed his successor — wise policy of — the French attempt to revive rebellion — are vanquished — squadron defeated by sir John Borlase Warren — Irish rebellion extinguished.

CHAP. LXI.

1797.

State of public opinions and sentiments at the meeting of parliament.

Effects of British victories, and the haughty conduct of France.

Discontent is much less prevalent than in former years.

The nation regards the continuance of war unavoidable, and bravely resolves to

IN England discontent was much less prevalent than in former years. The signal victories of our naval commanders gratified the national sense of honour and glory, and promised security against foreign invasion; the re-appearance of gold and silver proved the responsibility and extensive property of the bank, and dispelled apprehensions concerning national credit. The desertion of our allies, while it stimulated the energies of the country, pleased its patriotism, as our efforts were to be entirely for ourselves. The abrupt termination of the embassy at Lisle, that obviously arose from the determined hostility of France, roused indignant resentment against an enemy which durst presume to dictate to Britain. The nation in general deemed the continuance of the war now a measure of necessary self-defence, and was disposed to make the greatest exertions. With most patriots the question no longer was, were we prudent in going to war, or might we not before this

CHAP. LXI.

1797.

this time have made a peace; but we are now in a situation of great difficulty and danger, how can we best extricate ourselves? To common sense the answer was obvious: as the enemy will not make peace upon admissible terms, we must continue to fight. Before the meeting of parliament, his majesty published a declaration, stating the progress, difficulties, and result, of the negociation; and shewing that its rupture was owing to the unreasonable demands of France; calling on Britons to exert themselves adequately to the difficulty of the contest, and the importance and value of the objects at stake: he trusted that the resources of his kingdoms, and the spirit of his people, would vindicate the independence of their country, and "resist with just indignation the assumed superiority of an enemy against whom they fought with the courage, the success, and glory of their ancestors; and who aimed at nothing less than to destroy at once whatever has contributed to the prosperity and greatness of the British empire; all the channels of its industry; and all the sources of its power; its security from abroad, its tranquillity at home; and, above all, that constitution on which alone depends the undisturbed enjoyment of its religion, laws, and [1] liberties." Still his majesty was disposed to conclude peace upon the same equitable terms which he had now proposed. This address, appealing to the best feelings, most powerful sentiments and dearest interests of Britons, had a very general effect, which his majesty's speech at the opening of parliament tended strongly to increase. Ministers shewed very clearly that the continuance of the war, by the rupture of the negociation at Lisle, was owing to the enemy, not to Britain; thence they justly inferred the necessity of extraordinary efforts. Parliament, in an address to the throne,

meet the exigency.

The king publicly states the progress and rupture of the negociation.

The nation in general is disposed to support government.

Meeting of parliament.

[1] State Papers, October 25th, 1797.

said,

said, WE KNOW THAT GREAT EXERTIONS ARE NECESSARY: WE ARE PREPARED TO MAKE THEM: and the public in general coincided in this opinion and resolution. Aware not only of the state and circumstances of the nation, but of the sentiments and determination which recent events had diffused through the country, ministers from the joint result formed their schemes of finance, of internal vigilance and defence, and external armaments. The antecedent efforts of Britain had produced immense expenditure, and an enormous increase of debt, which added to the burden of taxes, contributed to the depression of the funds, rendered loans if not more difficult as to the attainment of principal, yet more disadvantageous as to the rate of interest: this was one ground on which the enemy rested their expectations. To render these hopes vain, to prevent the necessity of such an additional loan as would farther depress the funds, and to confirm public credit, was one of the primary objects which called for the attention of the legislature. The funded debt was already so great, that to add to it all the supplies that were necessary for the year would have been extremely inconvenient; and would have postponed an evil that must increase by continuance, instead of meeting it immediately and boldly. The minister, therefore, proposed to raise a capital within the year, in order to prevent that increase of permanent debt from which the enemy expected the downfal of our credit. It was wise (he said) to sacrifice a part, even though a considerable part, for the preservation of the whole. With this view he proposed to treble the assessed taxes; the greatest contribution, he calculated, would not exceed a tenth part of the income of the highest class of those by whom it was to be paid: to prevent evasion, not future but past assessments were to be made the basis of the new contribution; because the most impartial evi-

Encouraged by the public sentiments, the minister adopts a new scheme of finance.

He proposes to alleviate the funding system, by raising a great part of the supplies within the year,

and projects a multiplication of assessed taxes, which he presumes to be a criterion of income.

 dence

CHAP. LXI.

1797.

dence that could be obtained of the ability of each individual to contribute to the exigencies of the state was the amount of his expenditure before he had any temptation to lower it that he might elude the impost. The minister divided the assessed taxes, already paid, into different classes; those who were charged for male servants, carriages and horses, luxuries of life, were to pay for both these articles of luxury, and for their houses, windows, clocks, watches, the necessaries and conveniences of life, a sum varying according to their former amount from treble to quintuple. Those who paid for houses, windows, clocks, and watches, were charged an additional duty from one-fourth to five times the former amount, in proportion to its magnitude, from whence the ability of the contributor was inferred. Thus he whose assessed taxes before amounted to one pound, was to pay by this new plan, only one pound five; but he that before contributed fifty, by this new scheme, was to pay two hundred and fifty. But as large houses and numerous windows were, in many employments, instruments of profession or trade, a very considerable abatement was allowed in such circumstances; and the utmost contribution was not more than double the amount of the former assessments. There was besides, allowed to persons whose income did not exceed two hundred pounds, a gradation of reduction; the highest new assessments were to be one-tenth of that income descending to sixty pounds, which was to contribute only a hundred-and-twentieth part; and incomes below that sum were to contribute nothing towards the additional impost. Thus whatever the establishment was, even if it included male servants, horses and carriages, a person whose income did not exceed two hundred pounds, was not liable to pay more than twenty pounds of additional assessment.

Details.

During

1797.

During the former session, Mr. Fox had absented himself from parliament, together with several other gentlemen of opposition, declaring their attendance totally unavailing: on the discussion of the assessed taxes, however, both he and Mr. Sheridan made their appearance. The arguments of these illustrious senators [b], as well as other opponents to government, embraced grounds not immediately relative to the subject which was before parliament. Before they investigated the proposed scheme of finance, they contended that ministers throughout the war had demonstrated such incapacity and infatuation, that parliament ought to pledge itself to no measures for supporting government, until they received an assurance that ministers would be dismissed; they ought not to vote such enormous sums to be levied from their constituents, without security that the present weak and wasteful stewards were no longer to be entrusted with the management. Their reasoning they followed with strictures on the financial merits of this new scheme of pecuniary provision: it was, they said, a requisition the same in principle with the exactions of Robespierre; and from its retrospective operation, much more iniquitous; it was a change of system imposing an immense burden without promoting any advantage. The funded system was not exhausted: the difficulty attending great loans was, the difficulty of providing the interest; but how could ministers insist upon this, when they were ready to impose so large a sum on the country in one year? The measure would be as oppressive in its operation as it was unjust in its principle. Ministers answered, that the funded system was not abandoned, as only a comparatively small part of the supplies this year were to be raised by the new mode; that assessed taxes resulting from probable expenditure,

Arguments against, and for.

[b] See Parliamentary Debates, Dec. 1797.

CHAP. LXI.

1798.

were a fair criterion of income; and that the various modifications would prevent the apprehended inconveniences of the operation. An additional clause was proposed by Mr. Addington, allowing voluntary contributions, and adopted; and the finance scheme, after being farther combated in the house of peers, with this annexation, on the 12th of January 1798, was passed into a law. Voluntary contributions commenced from the most opulent classes and individuals: the first personage in the nation manifested his love to his subjects and his country by a sacrifice amounting to one-third of his personal income. The highest in rank co-operated with the most abounding in wealth: the nobility, the gentry, and farmers contributed very liberally, according to their respective stations and circumstances: the civil professions joined in the patriotic effort: the navy and army vied with each other in that species of exertion for a king and country, which their professional services and personal dangers had so strenuously and successfully defended, secured, and vindicated. Corporate bodies united with individuals; tradesmen and mechanics followed the example of bankers, merchants, companies, and corporations; journeymen and menial servants made such exertions as manifested their attachment to the king and constitution, under whom the fruits of industry are as sacred to the menial as to the greatest merchant; his rights and property to the labourer as to the lord. Nor were the contributions confined to men; the fair sex joined their donations for the service of a country in which their situation is pre-eminently respectable; a pre-eminence arising from the superiority of their virtues and accomplishments, joined to the superior discrimination of those who appreciate

Voluntary contributions proposed by Mr. Addington. The finance scheme is passed into a law.

Liberal contributions of all ranks and conditions.

ciate the British female character.[c] The highest personage set the example, an example that was liberally followed by her sex: even children sacrificed a great part of their means of gratification and amusement, to prove their zealous love for a country and constitution which they were themselves one day to support; and as they were to receive it from their fathers, to transmit it unimpaired to their posterity.[d] The amount of this contribution, calculated at about a million five hundred thousand pounds, was of less consequence as a fund of supply, than as a manifestation of the public resolution. Besides these supplies, there was a loan of seventeen millions, and Mr. Pitt now proposed a financial measure for the redemption, or rather the commutation, of the land-tax: its object was, to absorb a large quantity of stock, and in the process to transfer a great portion of the national debt into a landed security. The quantity of stock thus transferred was in its amount to equal, at least, the quantity of land-tax, which, by this means, should be extinguished, and become applicable to the public service. The amount of the land-tax is two millions sterling; the minister proposed to set it up at twenty years' purchase, when the three per cents. were at fifty with a proportionable rise of purchasage according to their increasing price. Forty millions sterling, the present amount of the land tax, at twenty years' purchase, would amount to eighty millions three per cent. stock at fifty, affording an interest of 2,400,000*l.* and leaving a clear gain to the revenue of 400,000*l.* a year. To simplify the operation; the purchase was to be made in stock, and not in money: the proprietor was to have the opportunity

Redemption of the land-tax.

Object to absorb a large quantity of funded stock.

[c] For a detailed account of the subscriptions, see the periodical journals of the times, copied from the lists which were officially published at the royal exchange, and in other parts.

[d] The contributions were considerable, both from public schools and private academies; of which last I remember various instances very honourable to the pupils and preceptors.

CHAP. LXI.

1798.

of pre-emption, as the land-tax was not to be offered to sale to third persons until the expiration of a certain period, to be given to the proprietor of the land to make his arrangements for the purchase; afterwards it was redeemable by the proprietor, on replacing to the original purchaser the same quantity of three per cent. stock which he paid as the price of his purchase.[c] Even if a gentleman of landed property were not able to raise the sum necessary for the purchase of his tax, without selling a part of his land for that purpose, he would still find the operation extremely advantageous. Were he to sell in order to purchase his land tax, for his land he would receive twenty-eight years' purchase at the average value; he would only have to pay twenty for his land-tax, so that he would be a clear gainer of eight years' purchase. This scheme encountered strong objections; the most important was, that, "by consenting to vote the land-tax perpetual, instead of bestowing it annually, parliament would give up one of the great checks which it had in the privilege of voting or withholding the public money." It was further said to be intended to benefit the monied interest at the expence of the landed; but these objections were over-ruled, and a bill conformable to Mr. Pitt's scheme was passed into a law.

Plan of national defence introduced by Mr. Dundas.

WITH financial resources, parliament considered and devised other means of defence. A plan for the security and protection of the realm was drawn by Mr. Dundas, and introduced into parliament in the form of a bill. Its object was to encourage loyal and patriotic associations for the defence of the country; to enable the lords lieutenants of counties to embody those who might be willing to come forward for the protection

[c] For a minute and detailed explanation of this subject, see Wright's Weekly Examiner, for the 19th of March, and the 7th of May, 1798.

1798.

of their laws, religion and property. The bill was passed into a law, and produced very speedy and extensive efforts; loyal associations to arm in their country's defence, which had before been confined to particular places, now became universal. The whole kingdom, and every one of its parts, exhibited those constitutional guardians, resolute to defend their king and country against foreign and domestic enemies. To make their resolutions effectual, the volunteers learned the use of arms, and paid an equally implicit obedience to the officers of their recommendation as if they had been under military law. While the members of the volunteer corps were zealous to increase their skill, utility, and numbers, zeal did not transport them beyond the bounds of prudence: the use of the military exercise depended upon the character and dispositions of the persons that made it a study; therefore a strict inquiry was instituted into the behaviour and political sentiments of those who proposed to be members. In London and the adjacent districts, two housekeepers of known integrity, respectability, and constitutional loyalty, testified the qualifications of the candidates: throughout the kingdom, that, or some other mode of a similar kind, was adopted for ascertaining eligibility. The persons chosen after this investigation were men, who in their variety of stations, had the welfare and honour of themselves, their families and friends, involved in the welfare and honour of their country: whose private and public affections and interests led to the same conduct; from whom their aged parents, beloved wives, and infant children, called for the same exertions as their king and country. Another measure of preventive policy, for the defence of the kingdom, adopted in the course of this session of parliament, was the revival of the alien bill. It was introduced in the house of commons on the 29th of March, and having undergone some amend-

Voluntary associations.

The whole nation becomes armed against foreign and domestic enemies.

Revival of the alien bill.

CHAP. LXI.

1798.

ments, passed on the 27th of April. The clauses added to the alien bill, were for obliging the letters of lodgings to give regular accounts to government of the foreigners who resided in their houses: and for enabling his majesty to detain foreigners; and to prevent aliens from landing in Great Britain, until the master of the vessel had authority to let them come on shore. On the 20th of April, a message was brought to the house of commons from his majesty, stating the advices he had received of great preparations for invading his dominions; and that in this design the enemy was encouraged by the correspondence and communications of the traiterous and disaffected persons and societies of these kingdoms. In such circumstances legislature deemed it expedient to renew a bill for detaining suspected persons. Mr. Wilberforce this session renewed his motion, for the abolition of the slave trade, but his proposition was rejected; several regulations however were made for alleviating the sufferings of the Africans in their passage, and a law was enacted for the purpose. In the course of the session, the duke of Bedford made a motion for an address to the king, to remove ministers; the debate on this subject necessarily consisted of arguments often repeated; and his proposition was rejected.

Apprehensions of an invasion.

Motion of the duke of Bedford for the removal of ministers, is negatived.

IRELAND was a subject of frequent inquiry and animadversion; but ministers represented the circumstances as too critical for public discussion; and, on the 29th of June, parliament was prorogued. Before the prorogation, the storm which long had been gathering in Ireland at length burst out, and the sister island became a scene of rebellious uproar. Having seen the fatal effects of coercion that was attempted towards the colonies, the British minister, from the latter years of the American war, adopted towards Ireland a much more liberal and enlightened system of policy. The penal statutes against the Roman catholics were repealed; they held their land

Prorogation of parliament.

Rebellion in Ireland.

Treatment of Ireland from the latter years of the American war.

The penal statutes

land on the like terms with the protestants; they enjoyed, in short, every right and franchise in common with the former, saving only the offices of state, and the privilege of sitting in parliament. The Irish catholics deemed themselves injured by the restrictions which continued, instead of being favoured by the relief bestowed; and desired a participation in the privileges that were still withheld. The protestants, considering the catholics as still unaltered, conceived that the admission of a sect so superior to their own in number, to an equality of privileges, would be eventually a surrender of their own acquisitions and possessions: outnumbering them and overpowering them in parliament, the catholics might claim and recover the possessions of their ancestors; of which they very naturally deemed the protestants usurpers. The lower classes of catholics, grossly ignorant and superstitious, and governed by their priests, were inflamed with the greatest rancour against the protestants, whom they abhorred as heretics, as well as detested as interlopers. These were their relative sentiments at the time the French revolution began to agitate all the neighbouring countries. Whatever sentiments might be entertained of the concomitant excesses, the revolution itself was imputed to the obstinate perseverence of the old government in its abuses. When the extraordinary events happened, on the 10th of August 1792, which overturned the French monarchy, the hopes of the reforming parties, both in England and Ireland, were equally elated: they now thought their wishes would infallibly be accomplished, and that the dread of the people would operate so powerfully upon their rulers, that these would hardly venture any longer to reject their demands, with such terrifying consequences before their eyes, of the king of France's opposition to popular demands. To promote the changes which they desired, certain persons formed a society to which they

CHAP. LXI.

1798.

against the catholics repealed.

The catholics desire a participation of political privileges, which is refused.

Effects of the French revolution.

United Irishmen.

CHAP. LXI.

1798.

they gave the name of United Irishmen.[f] This institution, projected and organized by Wolfe Tone, proposed to connect the whole Irish nation together, with the professed purpose of a general melioration of their condition, by a reform of parliament, and an equalization of catholic with protestant privileges, without any exceptions civil or political. The plan of union was formed on unity of object, connection of instruments, and a co-operation of means, that combined secrecy of proceeding with efficacy of counsel and conduct. No meeting was to consist of more than twelve persons; five of these meetings were represented by five members in a committee, vested with the management of all their affairs: from each of these committees, which were styled "baronial," a deputy attended in a superior committee, that presided over all those of the barony or district.[g] One or two deputies from each of these superior committees, composed one of the whole county, and two or three from every county committee composed a provincial committee. The provincial committees chose in their turn five persons to superintend the whole business of the union: they were elected by ballot, and only known to the secretaries of the provincial committees, who were officially the scrutineers. Thus, though their power was great, their agency was invisible, and they were obeyed without being seen or known. Whether the designs of these associates were originally to effect a complete separation of Ireland from Britain, has not been ascertained as a fact; but there is no doubt that in the progress of their concert, they had formed such a project[h]; and that parliamentary change, and catholic emancipation, were only pretexts with the heads and principal agents of this confederacy, in order to unite the greater numbers

Wolfe Tone.

Professed objects, reform in parliament, and catholic emancipation.

Real object and progress of.

[f] See Reports of the committees of the Irish parliament, 1797 and 1798.

[g] See Reports of the committees.

[h] See Reports of the committees of the Irish parliament, especially the committee of 1798.

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in the execution of their designs. The protestants, persuaded that whatever their purpose might be, the ferment which they were agitating must be inimical to the existing establishments, under the protection of which they held their privileges and property, formed counter-associations, and assumed the name of *Orange-men*, in honour of king William, the vindicator of protestant security, and the establisher of protestant property and power in Ireland. The Orange-men proposed to disarm the catholics. Bodies of these associated to resist the attempts, and assumed the name of *defenders*. Between the Orange-men and defenders various feuds took place, accompanied with great disorder, ferocity, and depredations, with some bloodshed on both sides. The United Irishmen did not immediately amalgamate with the defenders, who were rather violently outrageous than systematically designing. In them, however, they saw ready and willing instruments, when their own deep-laid schemes should be mature for open and avowed execution. Neither the prevalent broils, nor the several machinations, were unknown to the French rulers; they dispatched one Jackson, a native of Ireland, and a protestant clergyman, but now an emissary of France, as a spy, to Britain and to Ireland, in order to sound the dispositions of the people. Jackson, in Ireland, formed a connection with Wolfe Tone, Hamilton Rowan, and some of their associates, and proposed a plan of insurrection, in order to facilitate a French invasion. In England, Jackson had trusted his treasonable schemes to an intimate friend, one Cockayne, an attorney. This person communicated the projects to Mr. Pitt; and undertook to accompany his friend to Ireland, in order farther to discover his intentions and plots to government, from which he was to receive the sum of three hundred pounds, if, through his means, the capital conviction of his friend

Counter association of Orange-men.

Catholic defenders.

French mission to Ireland.

Proposed plan of insurrection to facilitate a French invasion.

CHAP. LXI.

1798.

friend should ensue.[1] Cockayne being thus engaged to accompany his friend to Ireland, and pretending to participate in the plot, was introduced to Rowan and other conspirators. A plan was formed for concerting a French invasion of Ireland: Jackson wrote several letters to correspondents abroad, explaining the state of Ireland, and the outlines of the project. The letters being sent to the post-office, Cockayne, who had perused them all, gave information to government: the letters were seized; Jackson was tried; Cockayne was the sole oral evidence; but the papers coinciding with his testimony, rendered the case so clear, that the jury without hesitation found the defendant guilty. Jackson was condemned to die; but by suicide anticipated execution. By this discovery the correspondence with France was suspended. Tone and Rowan made their escape. Lord Fitzwilliam was now arrived in Ireland, commissioned, as he conceived, to terminate all disputes in that country, by making the concessions which the Roman catholics demanded. Such also was the general persuasion of the Irish themselves: but as it was frustrated, and lord Fitzwilliam recalled, the discontents became deeper and more extensive than ever. From this time the united Irishmen

Apprehension of Jackson, and discoveries through him.

[1] From what has been already said about Messrs. Goslin, Taylor, &c. the witnesses in the state trials of 1794, the readers, I trust, have perceived the absolute necessity often imposed in conspiracies, on the most upright ministers, to employ spies and informers. Cases may even occur, as Cicero has well shewn in his Offices, in which a person is bound by conscience and duty to become an informer; but not *for hire*. How far Mr. Cockayne's motives would come under Cicero's moral exceptions may be best learnt from his own evidence, as recorded in the State Trials. Mr. Cockayne and Jackson had been very intimate friends: in the course of their intimacy, money transactions had taken place, rendering, by Mr. Cockayne's account, Jackson his debtor three hundred pounds. When Cockayne communicated his discoveries to the minister, it was intimated that, as the matter must become a subject of legal investigation, it would be necessary for him to substantiate the allegations: Mr. Cockayne was averse to give evidence against his friend, *because*, if the friend should be capitally convicted, he would lose the sum that was owing; but government agreeing to liquidate this account, his scruples were removed; he went to Dublin to become a witness for the crown. See Cockayne's evidence on Jackson's trial. Irish State Trials.

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CHAP. LXI.

1798.

proceeded with more dispatch and decision in their arrangements; a military organization took place in the several provinces; arms were procured, pikes fabricated, and every preparation was made to enter upon the execution of their schemes. The chiefs, and men of superior abilities and weight that had now joined the association, intended nothing less than a thorough revolution, and an abolition of all church establishments; while the common people sought principally to be discharged from the payment of tithes and ecclesiastical dues to the protestant clergy; in order to obtain which it was easy to persuade them that a total change of government was necessary. The activity of the leaders was indefatigable, and most extensively successful: those of their numbers who had absconded on the discoveries made by or through Cockayne, were now in France, and had settled a correspondence between their Irish associates and the French government. A proposal was made, by which the French were to assist the Irish with a considerable body of forces, to enable them to throw off their connection with England, and form themselves into a republic.[k] The offer was accepted; and lord Edward Fitzgerald, and Mr. Arthur O'Connor, were appointed to settle the terms of a treaty. For this purpose they went to France, met general Hoche in the summer of 1796, and arranged the business of the projected invasion, which was destined to be executed the following November. In the latter end of autumn, intelligence[l] arrived from France that the expedition was deferred to the following spring, when England should be invaded at the same time. Hence it happened that, when

Hopes of the catholics from the appointment of lord Fitzwilliam.

Consequences of his recal.

Farther progress of the united Irishmen.

They send ambassadors to France.

[k] See Reports of the committees of both houses of the Irish parliament in 1798, from which a considerable portion of the text is digested and formed.

[l] Whence this information came has never transpired: some have thought it a deception, fabricated by some secret partisan of the English; by others it has been attributed to the French themselves, with the view of lulling friends and foes into general tranquillity, thereby to effect their designs without opposition or interference.

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CHAP. LXI.

1798.

the French armament arrived on the coast of Ireland towards the close of the year, the Irish that were to second them, being wholly unapprised of their comming, were in no state of preparation, and the determined spirit of loyalty displayed by the friends of government, awed its adversaries; thence the French had not landed, but had returned to their own coast. The government was indeed very vigilant, and had, long before this time, procured an act to be passed authorising the magistrates to proclaim martial law, in case of imminent danger. A proclamation accordingly was made, and put in force at the arrival of the French. The disappointment of this expedition did not discourage the conspirators from prosecuting their plans. The chiefs of the Irish association sent doctor Macnevin, an able man of great importance in the combination, as minister to France. He informed the French government that if they would invade Ireland, the numbers ready for insurrection were immense, that a hundred and fifty thousand would rise in Ulster alone.[m] He also laid before them a plan of attack, demanded a supply of arms and money and particularly recommended that the French plenipotentiaries, then treating at Lisle with lord Malmsbury, should be instructed to make the dismemberment of Ireland from England a condition of the peace: he solemnly engaged that all the advances made for the service of Ireland, and all the expences already incurred, should be reimbursed as soon as affairs were settled, and its independence secured. France agreed to their other requests, but the government declared its inability at present to supply them with money. Meanwhile this conspiracy proceeded with such

Vigilance of the British government.

Martial law is proclaimed.

Mission of Macnevin to France.

His proposed scheme of military operations.

[m] To this expected insurrection may probably be referred the following verse—

"In the North I see friends, too long was I blind oh!"

in the celebrated song of Erin gu brah; in which pathetic music and seductive eloquence so powerfully propel ignorance to outrage and revolt.

secrecy

secrecy, that, though the penetration of the Irish government discovered there were strong grounds for suspicion, yet no precise information was procured: they did not till the month of April 1797, obtain certain intelligence of the transactions that were carried on in many parts of the kingdom. Government learned that, on the 14th, a number of seditious people were to meet at a house at Belfast; on this information, it was entered by a party of the military, and two of the association committees were found actually sitting: their papers were seized, and sufficient documents appeared to bring at once to light the nature and extent of the plot in agitation. This important discovery led to others in various places, and the danger and magnitude of the conspiracy was clearly ascertained. Government immediately employed precautions of every kind; enforced the act against illegal conventions; searched for arms, and seized great quantities. In operations requiring military force and summary execution, where there is a collision of attack and resistance, bloodshed is unavoidable; but the malcontents set the example of atrocious violence, by plundering houses and murdering the innocent inhabitants. The soldiers were not slow in retaliation, nor always discriminating in punishment. Both parties of Irishmen were inflamed by reciprocal suffering, and the acts of both bore the stamp of infuriated passion, and unrestrained licentiousness. The conspirators, first in recent transgression, were the more atrocious in barbarous acts; but their advocates imputed their conduct to the indignant resentment of men that had suffered long under systematic oppression, and in endeavouring by the most violent exertions to break their chains on the heads of their oppressors, little cared though these oppressors should be crushed in the struggle; and Ireland was now a scene of disorder, robbery, and massacre. In this situation of things,

CHAP. LXI.

1798.

things, the whig party, consisting chiefly of men of similar sentiments both in general and temporary politics with those of Messrs. Fox, Sheridan, Erskine, and their coadjutors in England, in May, proposed the conciliatory measure of parliamentary reform. In contentions between government and numerous bodies of the governed, conciliation is generally the soundest policy, if adopted before the passions be violently enflamed, and the projects matured. Conciliatory measures when adopted, appeased America, and if the system had been uniform, there is a moral certainty, that the war and all its dreadful consequences might have been prevented: spontaneous sacrifice on the part of the French monarchy, if offered at the first appearance of a spirit of liberty, might have preserved the greater part of what by too long tenacity it was compelled to relinquish: but conciliation, to be effectual, must be offered in the early stage of discontent, before resentment contracts inveteracy, and concerted resistance requires force. After rigid rejection of suppliant petitions, concession offered to men in arms, appears either the retraction of precipitancy; or submission of fear; and, instead of restoring confidence and attachment, encourages revolt, by representing it likely to succeed. Lenient measures were then too late; government and legislature acted wisely in rejecting them at so advanced a period of the conspiracy: thwarted in this attempt, the whigs withdrew from parliament.

The whig party propose conciliatory measures,

which are rejected as inapplicable to the case.

IRELAND was at this time in a deplorable state: the occupations in civil life were deserted, and the people were intent every where on preparations for war: those who were peacefully disposed could promise themselves no security; they were plundered by the malcontents, who collected in numerous armed bodies, and committed every species of outrage and devastation. Proclamations were issued, threatening severe punishments on the offenders;

Proclamations and proffers of

offenders; but they were as little regarded as the offers of pardon to those who forsook the rebellious associations. The conspirators projected a general insurrection, to take place in the summer of this year, and to be seconded by France. In July they received information that two armaments, one from Holland, and the other from Brest, were ready to sail for Ireland whenever they could elude the British fleets; they therefore postponed the intended rise, and waited with impatience for the arrival of the promised auxiliaries; but the defeat of the Dutch fleet in October was a fatal blow to their hopes.[n] France they knew had for maritime effort trusted chiefly to Spain and Holland, and their expectations from both had been blasted by Jervis and Duncan. But another fortunate circumstance for the British interests in Ireland was, that the object of the malcontents and of the French republic were totally different. The Irish conspirators sought the formation of their country into a republic, independent of Britain and also of France. The French proposed to subdue Ireland, and to form it into a government like the Batavian republic, dependent on themselves. The Irish, considering their own object, desired the directory to send ten thousand men, which would be a very efficient body of auxiliaries, without being dangerous to the principals. The French, to promote their purpose, proposed to send fifty thousand men, which they did not doubt would be able to model the whole island according to their views and pleasure. Finding the Irish, however, averse to their plan of invasion, they turned their attention to objects which they deemed more advantageous and more practicable. They now therefore received the propositions of the conspirators with great cool-

pardon are totally disregarded.

The united Irishmen concert measures for a general insurrection.

Disappointed by Duncan's defeat of the Dutch fleet.

Want of concert between the conspirators and the French republic.

[n] See Reports of the Secret Committees of the Irish parliament, 1798.

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CHAP. LXI.

1798.

ness; and the Irish despairing of any effectual assistance from the French republic, prepared for an insurrection, without waiting for co-operation from the continent. In spring 1798, they employed themselves in dispositions for war; and meanwhile, in every part of the country, were guilty of the most savage atrocities. The benevolent spirit of lord Moira, still hoping that conciliation might be effectual, proposed pacificatory measures, but government assured his lordship that any proffers of the kind would be unavailing, and lord Moira's conciliatory motion was rejected. Such was the secresy of the chief conspirators, that though the plot was discovered, yet the names of the plotters were not found out. At last one Reynolds, who had become an united Irishman, reflecting on their atrocious designs, was struck with remorse, and communicated their intentions to a friend, who prevailed on him fully to disclose the business and agents to government. On this discovery, fourteen of the chief delegates were seized in the house of Mr. Oliver Bond. Lord Edward Fitzgerald escaped, but being afterwards discovered, he resisted the officers sent to apprehend him, in the scuffle was mortally wounded, and died a few days after. The remaining conspirators, now grown desperate, proposed a general insurrection, to be executed in the night of the 24th of May: but captain Armstrong, a militia officer, who had insinuated himself into their confidence, and pretended to be an accomplice, apprized government of their designs. The two Sheares of Dublin, Neilson of Belfast, and several other chiefs, were arrested on the 23d of May, and the metropolis was put into a state of perfect security against any attempt. The conspirators thus deprived of their leaders, though scantily provided with arms and necessaries, deter-

Arrestation of the delegates,

hurries on rebellion before their designs were ripe.

[o] See Annual Register, 1798.

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CHAP. LXI.

1798.

mined notwithstanding to execute their project of general insurrection. They began rebellion, on the 24th of May, by attacking Naas, a town fifteen miles from Dublin; but they were repulsed by a body of Irish militia, under Lord Gosford. A band of insurgents at the same time took possession of the heights near Kilcullen, but they were dislodged by general Dundas, and between one and two hundred were killed and taken. To detail the various engagements which took place in this warfare, would exceed the space which the plan of the history allows; I shall therefore confine myself to the chief agents, operations, and results. The insurgents fighting with undisciplined courage, were frequently victorious over smaller numbers; but inflamed by their furious priests, where they prevailed, they exercised a savage barbarity unknown in the annals of civilised society.[p] The regular soldiers of the loyalists were not numerous, but the Irish militia fought with distinguished fidelity, valour, and effect, against the rebels. The English militia being at their own instance permitted by an act of parliament to assist their loyal fellow-subjects, several regiments crossed the channel, and were most powerfully instrumental in supporting the cause of government. To pass over desultory skirmishes, the first great scheme of rebel operation was in the counties of Carlow and Wexford: a large body of them having been repulsed at the former place, being reinforced, proceeded to Wexford, amounting to fifteen thousand: part of the garrison marched out to give them battle, but they were surrounded and entirely defeated.[q] In a few days after the insurgents took the town of Wexford, and a great number of prisoners. In their farther progress being repulsed, and infuriated by revenge and priestly instigation,

Rebellion. The insurgents near Dublin are defeated.

Alarming insurrection in Wexford; successes of;

[p] See Narrative of the Sufferings of Jackson, published in 1798.

[q] Otridge's Annual Register, 1798, p. 163.

CHAP. LXI.

1798.

they murdered their prisoners in cold blood. General Lake, on the 21st of June, gained a complete victory, the consequence of which was, that this tumultuary insurrection was entirely crushed.[r] In the north of Ireland a rebellion also broke out, but the insurgents were completely overcome at Ballynahinch, and the whole rebellion was quelled before the end of June. After that time, various scattered parties, taking refuge in the fastnesses and mountains, infested the adjacent country, but were rather marauding banditti that disturbed the police than insurgents that rebelled against the government. The most formidable of these parties was commanded by the daring and noted adventurer, Holt, who at length surrendered himself to government. The discovery and seizure of the principal conspirators prevented this rebellion being carried on with any efficient concert, in the south, it consisted of detached multitudes driven by their priests to desperate valour and savage cruelty; in the north, chiefly inhabited by protestant dissenters, it was by no means so general in extent, nor so merciless in operation. The rebellion of Ireland, appearing both to the viceroy and to his majesty to require a lord lieutenant who could act in a military as well as civil capacity, lord Camden therefore requested to be recalled, and the king appointed marquis Cornwallis his successor. The rebellion being finished, the new viceroy adopted a plan of mingled firmness and conciliation, which executed with discriminating judgment, tended to quiet Ireland, and prepare matters for a permanent plan to prevent the recurrence of such pernicious evils, and to promote the industry and prosperity of the country. The French with a small body attempted to revive rebellion in Ireland, and surprising our troops by their unexpected appearance,

at length they are defeated.

Rebellion is suppressed in the south.

Insurrection in the north advances, but is subdued.

Lord Camden desires to be recalled;

Marquis Cornwallis is appointed his successor;

wise policy of.

The French attempt to revive rebellion are

[r] See letters of general Lake, dated June 22d, and inserted in the London Gazette Extraordinary of June 26.

gained

1798.

gained a temporary advantage; but were soon overpowered and captured by lord Cornwallis. A French squadron of one ship of the line (the Hoche) and eight frigates, with troops and ammunition on board, destined for Ireland, was, on the 1st of October, taken or dispersed by a British squadron under sir John Borlase Warren[s]: the whole French equipment, with the exception of two frigates, fell ultimately into the hands of the English. Among the prisoners taken in the Hoche was Wolfe Tone, who being tried and condemned, hastened out of life by a voluntary death.

Squadron vanquished.

Squadron defeated by sir John Borlase Warren.

Irish rebellion extinguished.

[s] See letter from commodore Warren, in the London Gazette extraordinary, Oct. 21st, 1798.

CHAP. LXII.

French threats of an invasion — rouse the spirit, and stimulate the efforts of Britain — animated and energetic patriotism — the nation starts up in arms to defend their king, constitution, and country — against a people so disposed and so powerful, Bonaparte sees all attempts must be vain. — France turns her ambition to less hopeless projects — grand scheme of distant conquest — expedition under Bonaparte — learned and philosophic attendants of the expedition — captures Malta, a neutral island — lands in Egypt. — Sir. Horatio Nelson dispatched in pursuit of the French fleet — traverses the Mediterranean — descries them in Aboukir Bay — dispositions for attack — emulous ardour of the British heroes — rapidity of movement — strong position of the enemy, and collateral advantages — bold and surprising movement of the British — impetuous courage and extraordinary efforts of the French — in vain combat the naval heroism of England — decisive and splendid victory of Nelson — estimate of this achievement — political effects — extensive and momentous consequences of the battle of Aboukir — it stimulates all Europe to resist the ambition of France. — Affairs of Italy. — Russia — character of Paul — internal regulations, external policy. — State of the American republic, as affected by revolutions and contests in Europe.

CHAP. LXII.

1798.

THE inattention of the French to the affairs of Ireland, by no means arose from supineness: they were occupied with very grand and soaring projects. Their power was at this time enormous: Holland, Spain, and Italy were appendages of the French empire; Austria was prostrate at its feet; the mountains and fastnesses of Swizerland had not escaped the invading ambition of this potent neighbour; unprovoked by aggression the republicans had entered, pillaged, and revolutionized those brave

brave cantons. Ireland they saw was inaccessible to their schemes of subjugation: England, always terrible, was in the year 1798, become a nation of soldiers. From Caithness to Kent and Cornwall, the united nations were in arms: internal conspiracies were quashed, and all hearts and hands were joined in defiance of the French. The leaders of opposition[a], who had so often predicted the evils that would arise from persistance in the war, were among the readiest to meet the enemy, if he invaded Britain. Bonaparte was aware that Britain contained more formidable opponents than he had ever encountered; the defiles and precipices of the Alps and Apennines, guarded by myriads of Austrians fighting for their *masters*, could be surmounted; but the plains of Sussex and of Kent, containing hands and hearts of free-born Englishmen, fighting for THEMSELVES, would, he well knew, be impassable. Convinced of the hopelessness of any direct attempt upon England, the French government, and the general, formed a very grand scheme of conquest, which would ultimately extend to the richest possessions of Great Britain. The project was to subdue Malta, invade and reduce Egypt, and establish the French power in that country, with the double purpose of possessing the riches of the Nile, and extending their sway to the wealth of the Ganges: the empires of Turkey and Hindostan they proposed to render either parts or dependencies of the French republic. The projects for an invasion of England were apparently continued for

CHAP. LXII.

1798.

French threats of an invasion rouse the spirit and stimulate the efforts of Britain.

Animated and energetic patriotism.

The nation starts up in arms to defend their king, constitution, and country.

Against a people so disposed and so powerful, Bonaparte sees all attempts must be vain.

France turnes her ambition to less hopeless projects.

Grand scheme of distant conquest.

[a] No man shewed himself more loyally and patriotically resolute to combat in the field an invasion, than that illustrious nobleman, who in the vigour of a life devoted so warmly, wisely, and effectually, to the benefit of his country, has within these few days * been prematurely cut off in the middle of a benevolent and beneficial career, which entitled him to a much more estimable reputation, than any statesman or general could acquire by planning or carrying on aggressive war. See his proposed address to the king, March, 1798, and the speech by which it was supported.

* Written in March 1802, soon after the death of the duke of Bedford.

CHAP. LXII.

1798.

a considerable time after the design was laid aside, that their real purposes might be the better concealed and accomplished. While certain bodies of troops, and stores, were drawn towards the coasts of Normandy and Britanny, others were collected at Toulon: this port was the rendezvous of the expedition which sailed under the orders of Bonaparte, on the 20th of May 1798. It consisted of thirteen ships of the line, of which one carried a hundred and twenty guns, three eighty, and nine seventy-four, seven frigates of forty guns, besides smaller vessels, making altogether forty-four sail. The transports amounted to nearly two hundred, carrying about twenty thousand men, regular troops, with a proportionable number of horses and artillery, and immense quantities of provisions and military stores. Bonaparte in all his expeditions and designs included the advancement of knowledge, the subjection of matter to mind, and the subserviency of mind to his own views: with his *physical artillery* so tremendous to opponents, he carried an INTELLECTUAL AND MORAL ARTILLERY, tending still more effectually to break down all opposition. In his fleet there were scientific men and artists of every kind: astronomers, mathematicians, chemists, mineralogists, botanists, physicians, and many other classes of ingenious and learned men: certainly a much more rational assortment of attendants, than buffoons, parasites, priests, and prostitutes, the usual retinue of French monarchs when heading their army.[b] A variety of conjectures were formed with regard to the destination of this formidable armament: the largest that had ever been equipped in France, for any distant expedition. Malta and Egypt were generally pointed out as its principal objects; which they proved accordingly. The riches of the former were deemed a sufficient temptation for France to seize them, in its present

Expedition under Bonaparte, sails from Toulon.

Learned and philosophical attendants of the expedition.

[b] See Campaigns of Louis XV. in Flanders.

need

need of resources, exclusive of the abundant supply of skilful mariners to be drawn from that island, were the French to retain it: the latter appeared an acquisition of the highest importance of the commercial interest of France, which would enable it to intercept and ruin the trade of England in India, one of the principal resources of our opulence and naval grandeur. On the 9th of June, the fleet arriving at Malta, Bonaparte attacked that country, upon no better principle than Cyrus, Alexander, or Cæsar attacked Babylon, Persia, and Gaul; and annexed it to the possessions of France.[c] Departing on the 20th of June, on the 1st of July he reached the bay of Alexandria. CHAP. LXII. 1798.

Lands in Egypt.

The project of seizing and colonizing Egypt had been suggested by the count Vergennes, to the French government, during the monarchy. At present its seizure was extremely desirable to the French, because, besides its commercial benefits both actual and prospective, it opened a probable opportunity of revolutionizing Greece, long and ardently desirous of breaking the fetters of Turkish despotism. The French commander sent to the Greek states the strongest assurances of powerful aid, if they would vindicate their liberties. His ability, however, to perform his promises depended upon an element, the command of which Providence had bestowed on another; a truth of which France had many warnings, but now was to receive a most fatally signal lesson.

Lord St. Vincent commanded this year, as before, the fleet destined to watch the coasts of the ocean, and was cruizing off Cadiz when intelligence arrived of the departure and operations of the Gallic armament. While he himself continued to block the Spanish fleet, he detached a squadron in quest of the French expedition, and conferred the command on rear-admiral sir Horatio Nelson.

[c] See details of the capture and voyage, in Denon's Travels, chap. i. and ii.

This

CHAP. LXII.

1798.

This armament consisted of thirteen ships of the line and one of fifty guns.[d] The captains were all men of unquestionable zeal and professional talents, assisted by officers who highly merited their respective stations; and these were supported by crews who had been long practised in the habits of all that appertains to naval war; and the greater number of the ships had been engaged in distinguished actions.

Admiral Nelson sails in pursuit of the French fleet.

The British admiral first sailed towards Naples, and on the coast of Sicily learned that the enemy's fleet had visited Malta. Thither he hastened: but on his arrival was informed, they had departed from thence a few days before, and steered to the eastward. Conceiving that the French expedition was destined for Egypt, he proceeded directly thither; but arriving off Alexandria, he heard that they had not appeared on that coast.

He traverses the Mediterranean.

Eager to meet the enemy, and confident that they were in the Mediterranean, he proceeded in a course which he had not hitherto essayed: the British squadron was led northward to Rhodes. There hearing no tidings of the enemy, Nelson again returned to the westward; sailing along the coast to Morea, he learned from a Turkish governor that the French fleet had proceeded to Egypt, though they had not reached that country so soon as their pursuers. Sailing as quickly as possible, the British squadron again arrived on the coast of Egypt.

He descries them in Aboukir bay.

The Alexander and Leander, being before the rest, descried the Pharos of Alexandria, and immediately after, the fleet perceived the armament of the enemy lying at anchor in a line eastward from the pont of Aboukir.[e] The two ships which

[d] The ships were, the Vanguard, 74, rear-admiral sir Horatio Nelson, captain Berry; Orion, 74, sir J. Saumarez; Culloden, 74, Troubridge; Alexander, 74, Ball; Zealous, 74, S. Hood, captain Foley; Bellerophon, 74, captain Darby; Minotaur, 74, captain Louis; Defence, 74, captain Peyton; Audacious, 74, captain Gould; Majestic, 74, captain Westcott; Swiftsure, 74, captain Hallowell; Theseus, 74, captain Miller; Leander, 50, Thompson.

[e] Denon says, that one of the French ships descried our fleet.

had

had first perceived Alexandria, by this time had advanced nearer the coast on the right hand, so that the others, which were farther out to sea, were before them in rounding the cape. The Culloden being obliged to tow a vessel laden with wine, was somewhat behind the rest. CHAP. LXII. 1798.

Dispositions for attack.

THE genius of Nelson united that comprehensive foresight which completely provides for every probable occurrence, with the ready invention and prompt decision which meet unforeseen circumstances. Conceiving it likely that the enemy would be moored near the coast for easy and expeditious communication with their land forces, and knowing that the dexterity and boldness of English seamen could venture nearer land than the French would judge prudent, on this foundation he concerted his plan; and resolved that if it could be found at all practicable, part of his fleet running between them and the shore should attack them on the one side, while the rest should bear down upon the other, and thus inclose the foe between two fires. Having formed this general design, and reposing the highest confidence in the ability and courage of his officers and sailors, he directed that in its execution the captains should exercise their judgment in the time and place, and that every ship should begin battle where she could act most powerfully. On this occasion, there were such displays of emulation by every ship to gain an advanced post in the attack, as must have tended to inspire each other with an invincible confidence. So alert were the whole, that no ship could get a-head of another that was in the smallest degree advanced forward.[f] The admiral gave orders for attacking the enemy's van and centre, and soon after hoisted a signal for close engagement.

Emulous ardour of the British heroes.

Rapidity of movements.

[f] Besides gazettes and other documents, I have received many particulars from gentlemen who were present.

As

CHAP. LXII.

1798.

Strong position of the enemy, and collateral advantages.

As the British fleet was closing upon the enemy, a cannonade was begun by the French ships, supported by batteries from the castle of Bequires on Aboukir promontory. The enemy's fleet lay in a line with their heads towards the west. Having on their left, or larboard, the coast abounding with shoals, they had no apprehension that the British ships would make any attempt on that side, where besides shallow water, they would be so much annoyed by the batteries on shore: their defence was directed to the starboard, where only they expected an attack: but one adventurous movement of the British totally disconcerted the Gallic plan of combat. Captain Foley, in the Goliah, leading the British van, darted in a-head of the enemy's vanmost ship, Le Guerrier, doubled her larboard side, and having poured a destructive fire into the Frenchman, moved on to the second, whom he charged with tremendous fury. Next followed the Zealous, captain Hood, who attacked the enemy's vanmost ship, also on her side next the shore. Thirdly proceeded the Orion, sir James Saumarez, and took her station on the inside of the enemy's third ship. The Theseus, captain Miller, following the same example, encountered the enemy's fourth. Fifth came the Audacious, captain Gould, who moved round to the enemy's fifth. Sixth advanced the Vanguard, carrying the heroic Nelson, with his gallant Berry, and took his station opposite to the enemy's starboard, where, expecting the British efforts, they were prepared. The enemy's first and second, which had longest encountered our ships, being considerably damaged before Nelson came up, the admiral assailed that which was still fresh; the seventh, eighth, and ninth ships stationed themselves opposite to the fourth, fifth, and sixth ships of the enemy. Thus, by the masterly seamanship and conduct, with the dauntless valour of the

Bold and surprising movement of the British.

British

British commanders, nine of our ships were so disposed as to bear their force upon six of the enemy. The seventh of the French was L'Orient, a ship of immense size, being a hundred and twenty guns: this stupendous adversary was undertaken by the Bellerophon, captain Darby; while the Majestic, captain Westcott, attacked an antagonist farther a-stern. The British ships, thus arranged, played upon the enemy with the most tremendous effects. The heroic admiral himself was wounded in the head; but his soul animating his valiant countrymen, the ardour of their efforts was undiminished. Meanwhile the Leander and Alexander, captains Thompson and Ball, though by having been foremost on the side of Alexandria, they were behind the others in passing Aboukir, yet reached the enemy in time to partake of the most dreadful dangers of the conflict. The enemy fought with a valour and impetuous heroism which no efforts of courage and skill could have withstood but the extraordinary courage and skill which they had to encounter; they resolutely persevered in their exertions after the close of the evening till the approach of midnight. The conflict was now carried on in the darkness of the night in the southern latitudes, and the only light to guide their operations were the flashes of cannon. About twelve o'clock, the enemy's enormous ship, the L'Orient, was blown up with a terrible explosion, and a blaze that displayed at one glance the promontory of Aboukir, the capacious bay, and the magnificence of the Nile. The French now found all their endeavours hopeless; they however continued a languid fire, with increasing intermissions, and at length entirely desisted from opposition so unavailing. Morning opened a view, exhibiting at once the intrepid valour and obstinate resolution of the vanquished, the stupendous efforts and decisive victory of the conquerors. Of the French fleet two

Impetuous courage and extraordinary efforts of the French.

in vain combat the naval heroism of England.

Decisive and splendid victory of Nelson.

CHAP. LXII. 1798.

two ships only and two frigates escaped fire or destruction; so complete was the victory of British heroism and ability. The French transports in the harbour, and garrison in Alexandria, waited, in suspense, for their personal doom, as well as the fate of the French navy. Even as far as Rosetta, distant about thirty miles from Aboukir, the battle, by the aid of glasses, was seen by French officers, from its minarets and towers.[g] An interesting part of the prospect afforded by the dawning morn was, the adjacent shores all lined with natives, regarding with astonishment both in the conquered and conquerors, the terrible heroes of the north.

Estimate of this achievement.

As a sublime effort of naval genius, the history of ENGLAND HERSELF affords no instance more brilliant than the battle of the Nile. The head that projected the plan of attack, the hearts and hands that carried it into execution, deserve not merely the cold narrative of the historian, but the ardent description of the epic poet. Were Homer to rise from the dead, he would find a subject worthy of his muse in the British sailors and the British officers, headed by the British Nelson.

Political effects.

WHILE the renown of this action reached every quarter of the globe, its political effects were instantaneous and surprising over all Europe. The enemies of France every where recovered from the despondency by which they were oppressed previously to this glorious event; and an evident re-animation took place in all their councils, which were now occupied with the means of improving so signal a success. Reaching England, the news of this extraordinary victory filled the nation with joy and generous pride.

Extensive and momentous consequences of the battle of Aboukir:

GOVERNMENT, anticipating its political effects, were animated with the hopes of reviving and extending the combination against France. There were various circumstances favourable to this ex-

[g] See Denon's Travels, vol. i.

pectation: the Austrians regarded the treaty of Campo Formio as merely an armed truce, during which they were to make dispositions for renewing the combat.[h] The emperor himself, a harmless prince, and intent upon frivolous amusement, little comprehended the political interests of his dominions; but extremely plastic, was guided by his counsellors, and acted wisely or unwisely according to the directions he received. His ministers, having now time to recover from the consternation under which they had concluded a peace that left to France such valuable possessions, and finding a great portion of the French force, with its formidable leader, by the late victory separated from the country, began to perceive the practicability of recovering some of their lost advantages. A congress had been opened at Rastadt between the various princes of the Germanic empire and the French republic, for the adjustment of their respective pretensions; but the settlements went on very slowly, and many differences were either found or made. Catharine, empress of Russia, at first, had only been in name a member of the confederacy; but after the secession of Prussia, had judged it expedient to become serious, and was preparing a great force, when suddenly arrested by the hand of death. Her successor and son, Paul, though weak, was extremely imperious, and having the most despotic notions of kingly right, considered the Bourbon family as unjustly and iniquitously ejected from a rightful possession, which they derived from heaven; and not individuals, excluded from the executive office held by their ancestors, when the majority of the people conceived such an exclusion conducive to the public welfare: he therefore determined to attempt their restoration, which, after Nelson's victory, he thought practicable. Throughout his empire, but

stimulates all Europe to resist the power of France.

Russia.

Character of Paul.

[h] Annual Register, 1798, ch. ix.; and 1799, ch. viii.

especially

CHAP. LXII.

1798.

Internal regulations and external policy.

especially in the metropolis, he was chiefly anxious to preserve the gradation of ranks, and to resist novelty. The minuteness of his arrangements for this purpose extended to orders for wearing cocked hats instead of round, coats without capes, waistcoats with flaps, stocks instead of stiffened handkerchiefs, breeches and shoes with buckles instead of strings; prohibited half boots; and manifested a petty mind pursuing a great object, which was in its careless ease and appendages to reprobate republicanism, and to cherish monarchy in its stiff and formal ceremonials. His proclamations about shoe-buckles and neck-handkerchiefs as clearly demonstrated the intentions of such a man, as an edict for preventing an influx of revolutionists. Paul very directly and explicitly avowed his abhorrence of the French republic, and indicated such dispositions to overthrow the present revolutionary system, and re-establish monarchy. The Turks also were incensed at the French invasion of Egypt, and manifested a determination to use their utmost efforts to drive them from that country, and to combine with their enemies. The British ministers were not slow in discovering these views, and endeavoured to form a confederacy more powerful than the preceding alliance: nor were their views confined to Europe, but extended to the American republic.

State of the American republic as affected by revolutions and contests in Europe.

FRANCE, considering herself as the nurse of American liberty, from the confederacy of 1778, had cultivated a close connection with the new commonwealth. From the commencement of the French revolution, the Gallic republicans had eagerly desired to spread their own peculiar doctrines beyond the Atlantic: they had procured many votaries, but were not able to succeed with the more respectable and powerful classes in the united states; maintaining solid and beneficial liberty, property, and religion, these presented three potent bulwarks against

against the French revolution. The necessary precautions of Britain for preventing importation of stores into France, had given umbrage to the Americans; but on fully considering the necessity of the case, and the fairness and equality with which the British government had acted, they had been perfectly reconciled; and, in 1794, had concluded a treaty of amity and commerce. In 1796, the haughtiness of the directory on the one hand, and the prudence of America on the other, coincided with the policy of Britain in drawing the ties of confederation closer beween this country and the united states. The French republicans, considering the united states as indebted to France for their independence, bore with impatience and indignation that so great a benefit should be overlooked, and that, in this struggle for liberty, with so many powers combined against them from every quarter in Europe, they should be forsaken by that people, in whose cause they had acted with so much zeal and success. But they were particularly displeased with the treaty of 1794, which they deemed inconsistent with the engagements between France and America. The French government breathed nothing but revenge; and its agents were extremely active in exertions to revolutionise America. Two parties now existed in the states, which, from their objects, may be deemed the constitutional, or supporters of the established government; and the revolutionary, or abettors of innovations on the model of the French changes. Of the former were the greater number of men of property, character, and importance in the state; of the latter were demagogues and their votaries, and the same kind of men that were agitators of discontent in Great Britain, and that are agitators of discontent in all countries where circumstances afford an opportunity. The object of the constitutional party was peace and neutrality, not to be interrupted by the contests of

CHAP. LXII. 1798.

CHAP. LXII. 1798.

Europe. These would, in the course of a few years, raise the united states to a condition of prosperity and power, that must render them formidable to all the world, and secure to them tranquillity at home, and respect from abroad. The French having intercepted a letter from the united states to the ambassador at London, expressing these sentiments, considered this avowal of neutrality as inimical to the republic of France, and hoped to effect such a change in America as would render them dependent on France; and, by their agents, ardently endeavoured to spread principles of jacobinical revolution. Meanwhile, they made very imperious remonstrances to the government of the united states; and at length passed a decree directing her privateers to capture the vessels of neutral nations. In consequence of this decree, numerous captures of American vessels were made by the cruizers of the French republic, and of some of those of Spain, during the year 1797. A farther decree, on the subject of maritime affairs, was issued in January 1798, "That all ships, having for their cargoes, in whole or in part, any English merchandise, should be held lawful prizes, whoever might be the proprietor of that merchandise; which should be held contraband from the single circumstance of its coming from England, or any of its foreign settlements." It was also enacted, that the harbours of France should be shut against all ships, except in cases of distress, that had so much as touched at any English port; and, that neutral sailors, found on board English vessels, should be put to death. The execution of this last decree was prevented by a declaration on the part of Britain, threatening retaliation. But these hostile proceedings extremely incensed the Americans, and disposed them to enmity with the country that they considered as the universal disturber of other states. Convinced, however, of the policy of persevering in neutrality,

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the American government still attempted conciliatory measures; and instructed their envoy to endeavour to re-establish harmony between the French and the American republics: but the directory haughtily refused an audience. Imputing to intimidation the American desire of preserving peace, the directory resolved to make the most of their supposed fears; and intimated, that if a treaty was to be renewed between France and America, the states must contribute, in return for this friendship, a very large sum of money; and farther intimated, that it would be impossible for America to resist the power of France. The American government was well aware, that boasts of a power to be exerted by France on the ocean, where Britain was her opponent, were not to be dreaded as the means of conquest: still however, should a rupture take place, their trade they knew would be very materially injured: they therefore made such a reply as shewed that they still desired peace, though they would not be bullied to concession; and they declared themselves solicitous to avoid a contest with the French republic. One object only was dearer to them than the friendship of France, their national independence: America, they observed, had taken a neutral station: to lend a sum of money to a belligerent power, abounding in every thing requisite for war, but money, would be to relinquish their neutrality, and take part in the contest. To lend that money, under the lash and coercion of France, would be to relinquish the government of themselves, and to submit to a foreign government imposed by force. They would make one manly struggle before they surrendered their national independence. America was not like the petty nations of Europe that had become subject to the Gallic yoke; they were competent to their own defence against all hostile

CHAP. LXII. 1798.

attacks; they could maintain their own rights. The French still continued to demand a loan[1], to capture American ships, and to employ the most imperious and insulting language, which a free, brave, and independent people, regarded with equal indignation and contempt, and prepared to repel force by force. Liberty was granted by congress to individuals to fit out privateers to make reprisals: measures were adopted for forming and establishing a powerful navy, to protect and defend the American flag. The army was strengthened, and the command was bestowed on general Washington: the destruction of the French fleet at Aboukir spread joy over the constitutional Americans, and stimulated their preparations against a power which they had good reason to deem the disturber of all established society; and thus the exertions of America were expected by the European enemies of republican France, to co-operate with their efforts.

AMIDST the signal successes of Britain in preventing invasion, suppressing rebellion, and crushing the naval force of the enemy, she experienced one disappointment: an expedition was undertaken against Ostend, with a view of seizing the ships and stores there deposited by the enemy. The armament consisted of a naval force, commanded by captain Home Popham, and a body of troops commanded by general Coote. Their first effort was successful, but great numbers of republican forces having been rapidly assembled at Ostend,

[1] See the correspondence and conferences between the French minister and the American envoys, with the proceedings of the American government thereon, as detailed in State Papers, 1798. The publication of this correspondence (as the Annual Register observes) between Talleyrand and the American ministers of peace, made a lively and deep impression on all the nations of Europe. Not all their actual depredations in Germany, the Netherlands, Holland, Switzerland, and Italy; no not their plunder of the Papal territories, afforded to the minds of men so convincing a proof, that the French republic was governed not more by a thirst of universal dominion, than by a rage for plunder, as even an attempt to subject the Americans to tribute.

overpowered the British troops, and compelled them to surrender; but captain Popham brought off his department of the expedition. This miscarriage was but little regarded in a year of such extraordinary efforts, brilliant and momentous atchievements, as the renowned 1798 was to Great Britain.

CHAP. LXIII.

Britain — effects of the late glorious campaign — discontent is silenced — ministers recover a high degree of popularity. — Meeting of parliament — grand objects, to provide for internal defence, strengthen the confederacy, and form an union with Ireland — supplies — income tax — objections and arguments for and against — subsidy to the emperor of Russia — arguments for and against — splendid speech of Mr. Pitt on the advantages which might be derived from the emperor Paul — powerful impression of on the house — the subsidy is granted — motion for peace — opposition reprobate a new confederacy — the motion is negatived — the professed object of war, security — great object of the British government to excite and invigorate a coalition against France. — Measures for the better administration of Ireland — Mr. Pitt's plan of union with Ireland submitted to parliament — arguments for and against — proposed to the Irish parliament — discussed — vehemently opposed in Ireland — literary efforts on both sides — renewed suspension of the Habeas Corpus act — inquiry into the state prisons — farther provisions for internal defence and security — parliament prorogued.

CHAP. LXIII.

1798. Britain. Effects of the late glorious campaign.

AS the disposition of the nation had been much more favourable to the ministers, in the close of 1797 than at the end of 1796, so at the termination of 1798, they were more generally popular than at any period since the first year of the war. The assessed taxes, having undergone so many modifications, were not much felt but by the higher classes, who with few exceptions were favourable to government. Among the middling ranks, and also including some of the lower orders, the loyal associations superinduced a military character on the civil ideas and sentiments of their members, and had a powerful tendency to render them

1798.

them well affected to government and administration, with whom they naturally deemed themselves co-operators in defending their country from foreign invasion, and internal disturbance. Discontent was silenced; the subjugation of rebellion in Ireland strengthened the power of the British government: the splendid battle of the Nile, so gratifying to the generous pride of British patriotism, encircling the whole nation with the rays of glory, reflected part of its lustre on those ministers who had furnished the force and selected the commanders. The contemplation of magnificent victory acquired by national prowess, engrossing the thoughts of the multitude, suspended all retrospective inquiry into the wisdom of the contest, the energy and skill of preceding plans, the consequent events, and the general result of benefit to Great Britain. As our arms had been so eminently successful, the counsels of the ministers recovered a very considerable share of popularity and applause. Such was the state of things and the disposition of the people, when parliament met November 20th, 1798. His majesty's speech having bestowed the just tribute of applause on the glorious achievements of the campaign, mentioned his hopes that our efforts and successes would inspirit other powers to such exertions as might lead to the general deliverance of Europe. He entertained great expectations from the example of Russia and the Ottoman Porte, which, joined to the disposition manifested almost universally in the different countries struggling under the yoke of France, must be a powerful encouragement to other states, to adopt that vigorous line of conduct, which experience had proved to be alone consistent with security and honour. The supreme objects of parliamentary provision were propositions of finance and force for internal defence, and for invigorating the confederacy which was now forming; and

Discontent is silenced.

Ministers recover a high degree of popularity.

Meeting of parliament.

Grand objects, to provide for internal defence, strengthen

CHAP. LXIII.

1798.

the confederacy, and form an union with Ireland.

Supplies.

Income tax:

objections and arguments for and against.

and propositions of permanent union between Great Britain and Ireland. The army demanded for the year 1799, was somewhat greater and more expensive than for the former. For the navy, a hundred and twenty thousand were required, instead of a hundred and ten thousand. The assessed taxes, from the number of modifications, had failed in productiveness: in lieu of it, the minister therefore proposed a direct tax upon income, requiring one tenth on all incomes exceeding two hundred pounds. To this proposition various objections were made: it was said to be a requisition similar in principle to the reprobated exactions of the French rulers; and an application of the revolutionary maxim, that all property belongs to the state. It compelled a disclosure of property, in many respects extremely inconvenient to mercantile men. To these general objections to the principle, were added more special arguments against the provisions; that two hundred pounds was much too low a rate to admit a subtraction of one tenth; that the gradation ought to continue to at least five hundred, to be balanced by increased contributions from large incomes. It was farther said, that the source of income ought to be considered; that persons deriving a revenue from professional industry and skill, or trade, ought not to pay the same proportion as landed and monied capitalists; because part of their income might be equitably allowed to be reserved for accumulating a capital. It was said that Mr. Pitt, in resisting modifications to those effects, rather employed that trimming dexterity which courted the favour of landed and monied capitalists, than the liberal and wise policy which sought the least burdensome mode of necessary impost. Having undergone these objections, Mr. Pitt's new scheme of finance was by a very great majority passed into a law. From the income tax he expected about ten millions, and the

rest

rest of the supplies were to be raised by a loan amounting to about fifteen millions. The taxes in addition to income were new imposts upon sugar and coffee, on bills of exchange and stamps. The British government, deeming the co-operation of the Russian emperor against the French republic as of the first importance, had so successfully made application to his present dispositions, that an alliance was concluded between the two powers. A provisional treaty was concluded between Great Britain and Russia, December 18th, 1798[a], the general object of which was to concert such measures as might contribute, in the most efficacious manner, to oppose the successes of the French arms, and the extension of the principles of anarchy, and to bring about a solid peace, together with the re-establishment of the balance of Europe. His Britannic majesty engaged to furnish the pecuniary succours: 225,000*l.* sterling for the first and most urgent expences; of which, 75,000*l.* was to be paid as soon as the troops should have passed the Russian frontier; and that the other two moieties of a like sum each. It was also stipulated, that his Britannic majesty should pay, for a campaign of eight months, a subsidy of 112,500*l.* per month, two-thirds of the sum to be immediately paid, the other third at the conclusion of a peace.[b] The emperor, on his part, was to bring to the field forty-five thousand men, in cavalry and infantry, with the necessary artillery. The contracting parties engaged not to make either peace or armistice, without including each other in the treaty. A message from his majesty stated this convention to

Subsidy to the emperor of Russia.

[a] See State Papers.

[b] Russian subsidy — first expence - - - - - - - - - £225,000
Monthly 75,000*l.* for eight months - - - - - - - - - 600,000
A balance of 37,500*l.* for said eight months payable after the peace - 300,000
1,125,000

parliament,

CHAP. LXIII.

1798.

parliament, and the requisite subsidy was proposed by ministers. The proposition did not pass without objection: the opponents of ministers asked what benefit was to accrue to England from the services of Russia, to balance a present of 225,000*l.* and an annuity of 1,350,000*l.* Might not Paul apply the money to his own purposes, like another prince who had so completely duped the ministers.

Arguments for and against.

Splendid speech of Mr. Pitt, in praise of the emperor Paul.

Mr. Pitt, in a very eloquent speech, enlarged on the merits of the prince who now swayed the Russian sceptre: he expatiated on Paul's magnanimity, zeal for religion, justice, property, and social order. From this assemblage of virtues, which the brilliant genius of the minister painted with his usual force of delineation and splendor of colour, he inferred fidelity and consistency in the emperor.

Powerful impressions of on the house.

His striking eulogy made a most powerful impression upon the house, and on the faith of Paul's pious, honourable, and conscientious character,

The subsidy is granted.

the house, without any other security, voted the sums which were required. Three millions more were granted to his majesty for making good such other engagements as he might contract. The opponents of administration, apprehending that such projects of new alliance might continue hostilities, proposed an address to his majesty, deprecating any negociation that might be inimical to the peace. We were likely to be again engaged in a crusading confederacy against France, which, we might be assured, would prove inefficient. If ministers, as they professed, did not fight for the restoration of the Bourbon family, what did they mean to effect? They professed to fight for SECURITY; how were the Russian or Austrian efforts to produce the security of England? The safety of this country depended on her own power, and especially her maritime exertions. The victory at Aboukir afforded, if properly improved, a most favourable opportunity for concluding a peace:

Motion for peace.

Opposition reprobate a new confederacy.

now

now was the time to offer terms of accommodation to France, when she was so deeply impressed with the impossibility of encountering the navy of England. These arguments having no weight with the majorities in parliament, the proposed address was negatived. That ministers did not propose the restoration of the house of Bourbon, we are assured by their reiterated professions and declarations. Since the re-establishment of monarchy was not their purpose, the historian, judging from their conduct, must find it difficult to discover what other object they could, by reviving a confederacy, propose to pursue. Here, however, the declarations of British ministers are uniformly consistent—we were fighting for SECURITY. If we subsidised Prussia, the benefit which was to compensate the price paid, was to be *security*. If we subsidised Austria and Russia, we were to be gainers by the additional *security* which their purchased efforts were to produce. Security is a kind of metaphysical generality, the import and application of which might admit very different and contrary systems of efforts. If we proposed to go on in war until we attained what metaphysical politicians might call security, wisdom would of course examine the probable trouble and cost of the means, with the probable practicability and value of the ends; wisdom would ascertain, before she engaged deeply in supporting Russia and Austria by the resources of England, how far the advances of these powers, in a remote part of Europe, were to make England more secure than we could be, with less trouble and cost, through our own army and navy. Government and legislature appeared, however, to think that immense advantages might be derived from a new confederacy; and the great object of Britain in her foreign politics at present was to inspirit and invigorate a coalition of continental powers, to act offensively against France in 1799.

The motion is negatived.

Great object of the British government to excite and invigorate a coalition against France.

WHILE

CHAP. LXIII.

1798.

Measures for the better administration in Ireland.

WHILE these schemes of external operation were forming, the ministers were actively employed in proposing measures for the better management of the sister kingdom. Ireland had, for many centuries, formed one dominion with England, and, allowing to this country a superiority in the nomination of her king, she claimed and enjoyed, in every other respect, an equality of rights with Englishmen. As the privileges of subjects in both kingdoms were the same, the king's prerogatives were also the same. What the English parliaments were doing in England, the Irish parliaments imitated in Ireland; but as different interests and different views predominated in the parliament of each kingdom, different commercial regulations followed of course, and the opposite shores of the Irish channel became, by degrees, mutually inimical. A wall of separation was raised between the two kingdoms, to the prejudice of both; and commercial concerns, which, in the beginning, were directed by a law of uniformity, came thus to be directed by a law of diversity. For want of a more regular and more defined system of connection between the two islands, since the abolition of the feudal tenures, this undefined supremacy of the English parliament over Ireland was regarded as the sole remaining anchor that held Great Britain and Ireland together; as the only principle that made them one in political power and dominion. This system however was abolished under the Rockingham administration, in 1782; the motion for the abolition of the old constitution was followed by another proposition, declaring the absolute necessity of forming a new polity, which might connect the interests and privileges of the two kingdoms. But though the wisdom, and even necessity, of this connection were admitted, yet no measures were adopted for carrying it into effect. The three great objects to be accomplished for the formation

formation of a constitutional connection between the two nations were, an equality of interests, an equality of privileges, and an unity of [c] power. The two first of these purposes were already in a great measure provided for, and very little remained indeed that could be urged by any peaceable and well-disposed Irishmen, as a subject of complaint against the British government; but the unity of power or unity of defence between Great Britain and Ireland remained unsettled. To the want of a close political connection between Great Britain and Ireland, both eminent statesmen and political writers imputed the growth of disaffection to such an alarming height. The following is the substance of their arguments: — If there had been an union between Britain and Ireland, we should not have been exposed to the evils of rebellion, co-operating with foreign enemies. Many as were the political and commercial advantages which must accrue to both countries from union, so as to render such a measure generally expedient, the recent transactions rendered close connection more imperiously necessary at the present time: when the safety of the sister kingdom was assailed both by domestic treason and foreign force, what preserved the country but the aid of Britons? The only effectual remedy was to identify the interests of the two countries, to secure the same advantages in prosperity and in war, a free communication of the bravery, the resources, and the power of the empire for its common defence! The internal situation of Ireland strongly demonstrated the necessity of an union. While Ireland continued disjoined, any attempt to provide a salutary cure for her intestine divisions, or to allay the animosities which arise out of her religious difference[d],

Reasoning of statesmen and political writers, favourable to union between Britain and Ireland.

[c] Annual Register for 1799, chap xii.

[d] This argument is powerfully enforced in Mr. Pitt's introductory speech, which was published.

would

CHAP. LXIII.

1798.

would be impracticable. By considering the sects into which the population is divided, the remains of hostility between the English settlers and the native inhabitants, together with the unfortunate want of civilization more conspicuous there than in most parts of Europe, and the prevalence of Jacobin principles [e] among the very lowest classes of the people, we might comprehend the disastrous state of Ireland. For these evils no remedy could be devised but an imperial legislation, aloof from the prejudices, uninflamed by the passions, and uninfluenced by the jealousies, to which a local legislature must be liable.[f] "The leading distinction in Ireland (said the unionists) is that of protestant and catholic: the protestant feels that the claims of the catholic for power and privilege (for this now is all) threatens his ascendancy; and the catholic considers his exclusion as a grievance. Ireland in this respect forms an exception to every country in Europe, and runs counter to all received principles concerning religious [g] establishments. The religion of the government, and that of the multitude, are different, and the mass of property is in the hands of a smaller number. In the present state of things, full concession cannot be made to the catholics without endangering the existing constitution; but under a united constitution, privileges may be extended to the catholics with much more safety. Ireland at present wants industry and capital; capital may be imparted, and industry stimulated, by close connection with England. It is like a copartnery proposed by a great capitalist with a small, upon equal terms, and which consequently must be extremely beneficial to the poorer party: for these reasons, union between Great Britain and Ireland was ardently desired, not by government

[e] Arthur Young, passim.
[f] Mr. Pitt's speech on the 31st Jan. 1799.
[g] Ibid.

only,

1798.

Arguments of statesmen and writers adverse to union, from patriotic considerations.

only, but by many enlightened patriots totally unconnected with administration. On the other hand, many who were not in the general tenor of their conduct adverse to administration, were inimical to an union between the two countries: some of these were evidently actuated by the most generous motives; they dreaded union, as the destroyer of Irish independence; they conceived that the projected connection would be, not a relation of equality between two states agreeing to unite for common benefit, but a relation of superiority and dependence; that Ireland so joined to England, would be merely a province; that England would be the great receptacle of wealth, into which would be drawn all the products of Irish fertility, ingenuity, industry, and skill; that the transfer of the legislature to the British metropolis would bring the nobility and gentry from Ireland to Britain; that the provincial towns of Ireland, and the metropolis itself, would be deserted; that capital, at present so much wanted to commerce and manufactures, would become still more defective, because so great a portion of its constituents would be absorbed into another country; that industry, long so languid, and recently in some parts beginning to be excited, would, when such incentives were withdrawn, become more languid than ever; that Ireland would again revert to the idleness and barbarity from which, left recently to herself, she was emerging. While a dependent on Britain, she had been in the most miserable and distressed state; from the time that these fetters had been relaxed, she had begun to flourish: this recent and contrasted experience strongly forbade recurrence to real vassalage, under the pretext of an equal union. Ireland, as an independent kingdom, though not supremely powerful, would be more respectable and prosperous than as a tributary appendage of a great and extensive empire:

CHAP. LXIII.

1798.

empire[h]: besides, Britain, with all her commercial opulence and political power, was encumbered with an enormous debt; must the growing enterprise and wealth of Ireland be subjected to burdens not incurred by herself, nor on her account; must Irish agriculture, manufactures, and commerce, be taxed to liquidate the accumulated profusion of the British government in all its belligerent projects for more than a century? As to a copartnery, it was not like a very rich man admitting a poor man upon his firm; it was a man of very extensive concerns, including immense engagements and responsibilities, proposing to take into his company an active, enterprising, and industrious trader, of growing prosperity, who might at once bear a share in his burdens, and promote his trade. Ireland was likely to prosper much more by separate adventure, than by a joint stock company so circumstanced. These were the sentiments and reasonings of Irish patriots, who, whether their conceptions or inferences were right or wrong, were actuated by regard for the honour and prosperity of their country. The citizens of Dublin were very hostile to a design, which they apprehended might desolate their beautiful and flourishing metropolis; they indeed appeared to have imbibed the same fears respecting their city, that during the discussion of the British union combining with a creative fancy, dictated the celebrated prophecy of lord Belhaven, so beautiful and eloquent as a poetic vision, and so totally falsified by experience.[i] Irish imagination, not less vivid and fertile than Scottish, conceived that by union, grass would grow on the main streets of Dublin. There were others, who, without being inimical to the British ministers, were averse to the

Selfish motives of certain parties and classes.

[h] These arguments were employed by earl Moira and Mr. Sheridan in parliament; and by many writers, especially Dr. Duigenau.

[i] See Somerville's History of Queen Anne.

union

union from much less liberal and patriotic motives; who did not so much consider the honour and general good of Ireland, as the exclusive advantages which their own parties and classes had long enjoyed. Many of the protestants conceived that an union was intended to be a prelude to catholic emancipation, which it would certainly facilitate. A junto of these, usually known by the name of the Beresford party, had long governed Ireland, and stimulated the most coercive measures in the various stages of progressive discontent: this combination was very inimical to union, which they apprehended might extend the supreme power and influence to other parties and denominations. Ireland, indeed, was ruled by an oligarchy, which very naturally reprobated a measure likely to produce a more extended and popular system of authority. Of the Irish lawyers, many were inimical to a change of legislature, which, transferring the supreme judicial court to the metropolis of Britain, would, they apprehended, carry a great part of their parliamentary business to English counsellors. Whilst from different motives, totally unconnected with opposition to government, great numbers of various classes and denominations deprecated an union between the two countries, the malcontents not only detested every additional scheme of connection, but desired a total separation. The united Irishmen, who though repressed were still extremely numerous, desired a democratical republic entirely independent of England; they concurred with the unionists in considering the proposed connection as intended and fitted to counteract their project of complete disunion, and not only encouraged aversion to the scheme among their own associates, but very actively inflamed the other causes of dislike. To these different opponents of a closer connection between the two islands, may be

Views of the disaffected;

of anti-ministerialists.

CHAP. LXIII.

1798. be added the usual party in both countries, which had been uniformly anti-ministerial: these professing to regard with jealousy and suspicion every important design of administration, reprobated the project of union as a scheme of ministerial patronage in the various branches of the constitution. While union was known to be in contemplation, and before its several impugners had arranged and disposed their respective arguments, one preliminary position was advanced, in which they all appeared to have concurred, though very different from the doctrines which some of them had maintained and practically exemplified in their late discussions with the votaries of disaffection; this was, that the Irish parliament was not competent to conclude a treaty of union; that so important a resolution could not be sanctioned but by the general consent of the people.

1799. SUCH was the state of sentiments and affairs, when on the 22d of January, the king sent a message to both houses of parliament, stating the unremitting industry with which our enemies persevered in their avowed design of effecting the separation of Ireland from this kingdom: he recommended to the lords and commons to consider the most effectual means of finally defeating that design, by disposing the parliaments of both kingdoms to provide in the manner which they should judge the most expedient, for settling such a complete and final adjustment, as might best tend to improve and perpetuate a connection essential for their common security, and consolidate the strength, power, and resources of the British empire. Mr. Pitt, in supporting the propriety of an union, exhibited a view of the settlement of 1782[k], which he contended was not designed to be final, and had really been found by experience totally inadequate to its purpose. Since

Mr. Pitt's reasoning on the advantages of an union.

[k] Parliamentary Debates, on the 31st of January, 1799.

that

that time nothing had been attempted to provide for that defective settlement, but the partial and inadequate measure of the Irish propositions, which were defeated by the persons who framed the resolution, but who formed no substitute in their room. Was there no probable case in which the legislatures of both kingdoms might differ? Had not one case actually arisen within the short space of sixteen years, the measure of the regency: the difference of object was evident, the Irish parliament had decided upon one principle, and the British parliament upon another. If in the present contest the opposition should have as much influence in Ireland, a vote for peace might be passed by the Irish parliament, and the efforts of Great Britain might be paralized by the sister kingdom.[1] Ireland in such a state might neutralize its ports, prevent levies of recruits for the army and navy, and might endanger the very existence of the empire. Parliament undoubtedly wished to render the connection between Great Britain and Ireland perpetual, but they would not promote a purpose so beneficial to both countries, if they neglected to bring forward some proposition which might secure the safety and advance the prosperity of Ireland, and remedy the miserable imperfections of the arrangement which was formed in 1782. It had been asserted by persons inimical to an union, that the Irish parliament was not competent to establish a measure which effected such a change in the constitution and relations of the country. He conceived that the parliament of Ireland, as of Britain, was fully competent to every purpose of legislation, and to enact laws for joining the two kingdoms as well as for any other purpose: an union was necessary to the interest of both countries, to improve their respective powers of

[1] Parliamentary Debates, on the 31st of January, 1799.

CHAP. LXIII. 1799.

productive industry, and to defend each other against internal commotion and foreign invasion: very great impediments now existed to the prosperity of Ireland, which would be entirely removed by an union with Great Britain.[m] The union with Scotland had been as much opposed, and by nearly the same arguments, prejudices, and misconceptions, creating similar alarms, and provoking similar outrages, to those which had lately taken place in Dublin; yet the advantages which the northern part of the united kingdom had derived from the union were abundantly apparent from the prosperity of the capital manufacturing towns, and of the country in general. After this introductory speech, he submitted to the house various propositions, the objects of which were to establish the advantages which might be derived from the union; to explain the principles by which such a connection might be more beneficial; to present the outlines of a plan which he framed for the purpose; and to declare the willingness of the British parliament to concur with the parliament of Ireland in effecting an union between the two kingdoms. He proposed that the kingdoms of Great Britain and Ireland, on a day to be appointed, should be joined into one kingdom, by the name of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.[n] That the succession of the crown of the united kingdom should be limited and fixed agreeably to the present settlement of the crowns of the separate kingdoms, according to the existing laws, and conformably to the terms of the union between England and Scotland. That the kingdoms so united should have one parliament, to be denominated the parliament of the united kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland; that such a number of lords, spiritual and temporal, and such a number of commons, as should hereafter be fixed

His plan of union between Britain and Ireland.

[m] Mr. Pitt's speech, Jan. 31st, 1799.
[n] Parliamentary Reports, Jan. 31st, 1799.

by

by the contracting parties, should be appointed to sit in the united parliament, and that on the part of Ireland they should be summoned, chosen, and returned as the Irish parliament should fix before the destined union. The churches of England and Ireland, the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government thereof, should continue the same in both countries as was established by the existing laws. His majesty's subjects in Ireland should be entitled to the same privileges, and should be on the same footing, in respect of trade and navigation, in all ports and places belonging to Great Britain, and in all cases with respect to which treaties might be made by his majesty, his heirs or successors, with any foreign power, as his majesty's subjects in Great Britain. The import and export duties of Great Britain and Ireland should be reciprocally equalized. The expences of the united kingdom should be defrayed by Great Britain in proportions to be established by their respective parliaments previously to the union: that for the like purpose it would be fit to propose, that all laws in force at the time of the union; and that all the courts of civil or ecclesiastical jurisdiction within the respective kingdoms, should remain as now by law established within the same, subject only to such alterations or regulations, from time to time, as circumstances might appear to the parliament of the united kingdom to require. These are the outlines of Mr. Pitt's scheme of union between Great Britain and Ireland, which he wished to be submitted to the Irish parliament, that if agreeable to that body it might be carried into effect.

CHAP. LXIII. 1799.

Union proposed to the Irish parliament;

While Mr. Pitt submitted these propositions to the English house of commons, the subject had been introduced into the Irish parliament, and a discussion had taken place, which having given the tone to British opposition, it is proper to mention, before the narrative proceeds to the arguments

CHAP. LXIII. 1799.

adduced here against the minister's project. In the upper house of the Irish parliament, an address friendly to the union was carried by a decisive majority; in the lower it passed by a majority of one, and a motion consequent on it was afterwards lost.

discussed and very vehemently opposed.

The opponents of the measure, in the Irish house of commons, did not enter into a full consideration of the advantages or disadvantages that might be likely to accrue from the scheme, nor prove that their was reason to induce the legislature to reject the proposition, but contented themselves with denying the competency of lawgivers to conclude such an agreement.[a] To prove the incompetency of parliament, they did not reason from experience of fact and tendency, but from abstract principles, and the admission of theories that in no case had been reduced to practice: they rested their system on Mr. Locke's social compact, an hypothesis which, however well it might be intended by its wise and benevolent author, is one of the principal sources of modern democracy. On these speculative grounds, they maintained the incompetency of the legislature to make such a contract without consulting their constituents: they also pressed the various arguments from expediency, patriotism, and national honour, which have been stated.

Opposition to this scheme in the British parliament.

The leading opponents in the British parliament were, in their respective houses, Mr. Sheridan and lord Moira; and the ground on which they principally rested, in the first discussion, was the declared disapprobation of the Irish house of commons.

Arguments of Mr. Sheridan and lord Moira.

As the commons of Ireland were avowedly averse to the project of union, it ought to be no farther agitated by England, until a more favourable disposition should appear in the other party. It was absurd to persist in pressing an union with a party unwilling to join, unless intimidation or force were intended. It was at present evident that there

[a] Irish Parliamentary Debates on the Union, January 1799.

could

could be no voluntary union between Britain and Ireland, therefore it would be much more prudent to suspend the subject until the parties should have time coolly to reflect on its probable advantages and disadvantages. Afterwards, if the parties became willing to take it into consideration, let it undergo a fair and impartial discussion: no measures could improve and perpetuate the amity and connection between Great Britain and Ireland, unless their basis were the free and manifest consent and approbation of their respective parliaments. They who should endeavour, by corruption or intimidation, to obtain the appearance of consent, would deserve to be branded as enemies to the king and constitution. Having disavowed every intention of intimidation, Mr. Pitt strongly contended that the subject should be discussed at present. Let Ireland (he said) completely know what is proposed, then let her judge. By the judgment of her parliament we must ultimately abide; but we wish to state every general principle, and every particular circumstance, on which we ground our proposals; and doubt not that, when coolly and dispassionately weighed, their ultimate decision will be different from their determination of the preliminary questions. With this view he proposed a committee for examining the articles, and the house agreed to his motion. In a more advanced stage of the business, Mr. Dundas very ably shewed the beneficial effects of the union between Scotland and England. He here took a view of the evils apprehended by the Scotch anti-unionists, and demonstrated not only the complete failure of their predictions, but the immense advantages that have accrued to Scotland from its incorporation with England.[p] Of these predictions lord Belhaven's were the most remarkable, as they exhibited in one view the apprehensions and arguments of the op-

Mr. Dundas argues from the beneficial effects of union with Scotland;

his remarks on the celebrated prophecy of

[p] Parliamentary Debates, February 1st, 1799.

CHAP. LXIII.

1799. lord Belhaven in the Scottish parliament.

posers of the union: "I think I see," said his lordship, "the royal state of boroughs walking their desolate streets." So far, Mr. Dundas said, are these prophecies from being verified, that most of the boroughs are ten times increased in population, industry, and wealth. To prove this, it is only necessary to mention the names of Edinburgh, Glasgow, Aberdeen, Perth, Montrose, Dundee, and, in short, every other town of any name or consequence in that part of the united kingdom. These were strong facts, tending to controvert the reasoning of persons who asserted that an union would lessen the population, manufactures, and commerce of Dublin and other Irish cities and boroughs. The Scottish anti-unionists had prophesied that a preference would be given to Englishmen over Scots in every employment; the event, as Mr. Dundas observed, proved totally different: natives of North Britain are almost exclusively employed in offices belonging to their own country, and a much greater number are established in England than if no union had taken place; we need only look into every profession throughout England from the Scotch gardener, baker, and hair-dresser, up to the Scotch merchant, physician, lawyer, general, and admiral, to prove that, since the union, merit has been equally rewarded throughout the whole island, whether its possessor was rocked in his cradle on the south or on the north side of the Tweed. The Scottish union tended to break asunder the bonds of feudal vassalage that had prevailed to so mischievous an excess in that country, and had allowed separate tyrants to exercise arbitrary power. The abolition of heritable jurisdictions, resulting from the union, had promoted agriculture [q] to a very great and rapidly

[q] In point of agriculture, Scotland, as is obvious to every one the least acquainted with the country, has undergone most extraordinary melioration from the time that the union completely operated, on pursuits of a much more gradual

rapidly increasing degree of improvement; like causes produced like effects; beneficial consequences of a similar kind would result to Ireland from union. Agriculture, manufactures, and commerce, mutually and reciprocally advanced each other; and whereas in the country of Scotland, there before existed only lord and dependent; the improvements from the union conjointly formed the middling class, which in England had ever been found the most efficacious supporters of our laws, liberty, and constitution, from the oppression of feudal aristocracy in former times, and the licentiousness of democracy in latter. One of the chief causes of the evils under which Ireland laboured, was the want of this intermediate class: a parliament, with local interests and prejudices, was not likely to devise, at least steadily to employ, means for the establishment of so important an order: by an imperial legislature only could so desirable a change be effected. The subject was also discussed in the house of peers, and great eloquence

gradual improvement than commerce; this change has, no doubt, arisen in a considerable degree from the increase of capital that flowed into the country, from the time that the poor trader was admitted into partnership with the rich. It has not, however, been solely owing to commercial advantages, but in a great measure to political regulations resulting from the union. Whoever has spoken or written on this subject, considers the destruction of feudal vassalage as an event that would have never happened had Scotland possessed a separate parliament; because most of the members of that parliament, by vanity, pride, and ambition, would have been engaged to oppose a measure which reduced them from being petty princes on their own estates, to an equal submission to the laws with their vassals, and even poorest tenants. The vassals had before bestowed a servile attendance on their chieftain, at whose call they had been obliged to repair to his castle, and neglect their own private affairs. In that dependent state they had estimated themselves, and each other, according to their place in the favour of their liege lord; and their chief occupation had been to court his good graces, by being lounging retainers about his mansion. Emancipated from their thraldom, they attended to the cultivation of their lands. The generous pride of personal independence succeeded the contemptible vanity which had been gratified by second-hand importance. To independence the surest road was industry; the subject for the employment of their industry was their hitherto neglected land; to their inferiors they communicated a portion of that independence which they themselves possessed, and began to enjoy: they let their farms upon long leases, and dispensed with the most humiliating services. The tenants were by the security of their tenures, stimulated to unusual industry.

was

CHAP. LXIII.

1799.

was displayed on both sides; and both houses of British parliament concurred in approving Mr. Pitt's propositions of union, and in an address to the king requesting his majesty to communicate to Ireland their views and resolutions. The king accordingly instructed the viceroy to lay the proffers and proceedings of the British before the Irish parliament.

So important a subject occupied a great proportion of literary ability[r] on both sides, and the press teemed with works on the justness and expediency of an union, with the means of carrying it most effectually into execution.

Farther provisions for internal defence and security.

THE farther parliamentary proceedings of the present session chiefly regarded external defence and internal tranquillity. There was now very little ground for fearing an invasion, and the measures adopted respecting Ireland tended to prevent the recurrence of rebellion: still, however, it was necessary to be vigilant. The supplementary militia therefore, without being increased, were continued on the same footing as in the former years.

Renewed suspension of the Habeas Corpus act.

The discontent and sedition which had so strongly prevailed, were now in a great measure dissipated: still, however, so much of malignity was by ministers and their supporters presumed to remain, as to render the suspension of the *habeas corpus* still necessary to be continued. A bill for continuing to his majesty the power of detaining suspected persons was introduced into parliament, and passed into a law.

Parliament is prorogued.

MR. WILBERFORCE renewed his annual motion for the abolition of the slave trade, but his efforts were again unavailing: parliament was prorogued on the 12th of July.

[r] Of these one of the most eminent was a treatise published by dean Tucker, many years before, strongly recommending union with Ireland. — It is to be hoped that his predictions respecting that connection will be as fully verified as the prophecies which he uttered concerning America. See vol. ii. of this History, p. 254.

CHAP. LXIV.

Congress at Rastadt — project of indemnities — principle, that the weaker should pay for the losses of the stronger through the power of the strongest — new requisitions of the French — are resisted — war — French plan of the campaign — plan of the confederates — the French armies invade Germany — and the Grisons — under Jourdain and Massena — battle between the archduke Charles and Jourdain — the French are defeated, and forced to evacuate Germany — advances of Massena to the Grisons — by the defeat of Jourdain he is obliged to retreat — Austrians invade Italy — successes — reduce the north-east of Italy — arrival of marshal Suwarrow with a Russian army — military operations and victories — affairs of Naples — French evacuate the south, and concentrate their force in the north of Italy — battle of Novi — Italy all reduced except Genoa — campaign in Switzerland and the Grisons — successes of the Austrians — French driven from the Grisons — Massena begins to restore the affairs of the French — defeats Korsakow the Russian general — Suwarrow marches into Switzerland — not properly supported by the Austrians — retires with the Russians towards Germany. — Naval transactions by the British in co-operation with the allies in Italy — the British fleets block up the ports of Holland, France, and Spain. — Expedition of the duke of York to Holland — its purposes — well-grounded hopes of success — plan of co-operation between Great Britain and Russia — British armament sails — troops land at the Helder — battle and victory — Dutch fleet surrenders — successive battles and victories of the British troops — advance to Alkmaer — battle at Limnen — indecisive — successes in the Zuyder Zee — British army obliged to fall back — difficult situation of the army — suspension of arms — British troops withdrawn from Holland. —

Short

Short meeting of parliament in September — supplies — prorogued.

CHAP. LXIV.

1799.

Congress at Rastadt.

AT the treaty of Campo Formio it had been agreed, that a congress should be held at Rastadt, composed solely of the plenipotentiaries of the Germanic empire and of the French republic, for the purpose of concluding a negotiation between those powers; and this congress had met in December 1797. To follow the meeting through the various details which occupied their attention, would be foreign to the purpose of the present history, and the accounts shall be confined to such proceedings as produced the rupture with France and the renewal of the confederacy with Britain.

Project of indemnities.

BY the treaty of Campo Formio it was agreed, that the Rhine should form the boundary between the French and German empires, and that a system of indemnities should make up to the princes of the Germanic empire for the losses which they should incur by this extension of the French empire; the proposed project was to be the secularization of the ecclesiastical estates; but in applying this general principle, there was a great interference of interests. Prussia and Austria proposed first the secularization of the chief ecclesiastical possessions; in other words, that because the great powers had sustained losses by the conquests of the French, the smaller should indemnify them for these losses. The ecclesiastical electors thought it vain to controvert the general principle of making the weak pay for the losses of the strong: but were for shifting the losses from themselves to a lower order: the electoral archbishops proposed to be indemnified for their sacrifices to the higher powers, from the possessions of the prince bishops. The prince bishops required the suppression of abbeys, monasteries, and the inferior prelacies.

Principle, that the weaker should pay for the losses of the stronger, through the power of the strongest.

Simple

CHAP. LXIV.

1799.

Simple as the principle of secularization was, yet the adjustment of such an intermixture of pretensions was not without difficulty. France indeed was not to be charged with enhancing the difficulty by any intricacy of her own claims, these were very explicit and definite: she, in the first place, was to occupy all the left bank for her share, and was afterwards to assist the Germans on the other, in settling their respective boundaries. The reason which she adduced for appropriating such an extent of territory was, not the love of dominion, *but the convenience of demarcation.* The Rhine was a natural boundary which the republic did not demand for the purpose of aggrandizement, but for fixing a secure and determinate frontier. Meanwhile the directory and its agents entered into the Germanic discussions of secularizations, and eagerly endeavoured to sow discord between the various states and members of the empire: they farther proposed to take under their own special protection the very opulent cities of Frankfort, Bremen, and Hamburgh, which they alleged to be coveted by German potentates; and that therefore it behoved the French republic to interpose its powerful mediation in their behalf. For these and other purposes, it was necessary that France should possess a weighty influence beyond the Rhine. The king of Prussia continued to favour France, and she thoroughly accomplished the appropriation of the left bank. France farther proposed the free navigation of the river to the opposite bank as well as her own, the re-establishment of commercial bridges, and a division of the islands on the Rhine, by which France was to possess those which best suited the convenience of her own boundary. France, possessing the left bank, was to strengthen and fortify it as she pleased, while she required the demolition of fortifications on the other bank, because they might interfere with the secure navigation

New requisitions of the French.

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CHAP. LXIV.

1799.

tion of the French upon the river.[a] The fortress of Ehrenbreitstein, situated upon the right bank of the Rhine, commands the entrance into Germany on the side of Westphalia, the Upper Rhine, and Hesse; this strong post the French desired to be destroyed. The evident object of this demand was to secure an entrance into Germany, whenever the republicans judged the opportunity favourable for the purposes, both general and special, which they had so very clearly manifested. Elated with success, and conceiving themselves irresistible by any continental effort, the French added to their boundless ambition an overweening and dictatorial insolence, which none of its objects could tolerate but from dread of the French power. The Austrians were now recovering from their disasters; incensed by the arrogance of France, which had manifested itself even in the heart of the Austrian capital[b], and inspirited by the proffers of military aid from Russia, and of pecuniary supply from Britain, they prepared for force, by which only the exorbitant demands of France could be resisted. The directory easily discovered[c] sentiments and designs so naturally resulting from their own series of ambition and haughtiness: learning that the Russians were on their march to the south, they no longer doubted that they were destined to co-operate with the imperial army in Italy: having three great armies ready for motion, they threatened to cross the Rhine, unless the Russians should retreat from the confines of Germany; and finding that Austria would not yield to their demands, they ordered their ambassadors to leave Rastadt, and immediately prepared to commence war.

are resisted.

[a] See note of the French ministers to the deputation of the empire, May 31st, 1798.

[b] Especially in the conduct of Bernadotte the ambassador, who hoisted the three-coloured flag of revolutionary democracy in sight of the Imperial palace. See Periodical Journals of the year 1798.

[c] See State Papers, Notes of the French ministers to the deputations of the empire, January 2d, and January 31st, 1799.

THE

War.

THE French, as we have seen, had totally changed the plan of war: their system consisted wholly in pursuing the enemy without intermission; courting opportunities of engagements; and keeping their whole force together, without dividing it for the purpose of carrying on sieges: the armies of France, instead of investing particular forts and towns, attacked whole countries. Fortresses which heretofore arrested, occupied and consumed armies, were passed with unconcern, insulated as it were by the enormous mass. To this extension of the theatre of war they were invited by their numbers, the superiority of their artillery, and the provision that was made by their moveable columns for the celerity of their motion. The plan of the directory was the same that had been pursued in 1796 and 1797; the invasion of the hereditary states of the house of Austria, and the junction of the French armies under the walls of Vienna. Of three hundred and twenty thousand men who at this time composed the French army, forty-five thousand, under the orders of general Massena, occupied Switzerland and the left bank of the Rhine, almost from its source to the western extremity of the lake of Constance, and from that point, the two banks of the river as far as Basle. Between that town and Dusseldorf were stationed about sixty-five thousand men; commanded by general Jourdain, and forming what was called the army of Mentz. It was intended that the army of Jourdain should cross the Rhine, traverse the defiles of the Black Forest, extend itself into Suabia, turn the lake of Constance, and the southern part of the Tyrol; and that the army of Switzerland should drive the Austrians from the country of the Grisons, attack the Tyrol in front and seize the valleys of Leck and of the Inn; while the army of Italy should penetrate into Germany, either through the Tyrol or Friuli.

French plan of the campaign.

THE

CHAP. LXIV.

1799.

Plan of the confederates.

THE situation and the views of the Austrians were as follow: more than sixty thousand were concentrated under the archduke on the Leck. Twenty thousand were collected in the Palatinate, in the environs of Auberg, or at Wurtzburg, under the orders of general Sztarray: a like number was headed by general Hotze, in the Voralberg and the country of the Grisons. Near twenty-five thousand, commanded by general Bellegarde, were on the frontiers of the Grisons and the Tyrol, part of which was on the Adige; and the rest in Friuli and Carinthia, was reckoned to be more than sixty thousand. Thus the emperor had to oppose to the French, one hundred and eighty-five thousand fighting men, ninety thousand of whom were in a situation for acting against Jourdain and Massena. But the Austrians being determined not to commence hostilities, acted at first on the defensive.

The French armies invade Germany and the Grisons, under Jourdain and Massena.

Jourdain, through Suabia, and Massena, through Switzerland, advanced towards Tyrol; between them, during a part of the march, was the Rhine and the lake of Constance; and on the eastern side of that great body of water they intended to form a junction. Jourdain, with this intent, marched eastward, with the left bank of the Rhine on his right, and his left extending northward to the duchy of Wirtemberg. Their armies being so far advanced, the directory threw off the mask, and declared war against the emperor. Jourdain, occupying the space between the lake and the Danube, advanced to meet the archduke coming from the Leck. Not restraining his troops from plundering the country, he, as in 1796, incensed the inhabitants, whose resentment communicated to the soldiers. Already indignant against the French for what they deemed a breach of the treaty, and an unprovoked invasion of their country, they were ardently desirous of chastising their insulting foe: the archduke skilfully availed himself of this spirit, and being somewhat

what superior in force, offered Jourdain battle. The French general had been endeavouring to execute the plan of junction with Massena; but the defiles, rivers, mountains, and other obstacles which the latter was obliged to encounter, had hitherto obstructed the scheme. A successful battle, Jourdain conceived, would effectually accomplish that object, and decide the fate of the campaign; and, confident of victory, he resolved to hazard a conflict. On the 21st, a partial engagement took place, in which great numbers were killed on both sides; but the Austrians were superior. On the 27th of April, Jourdain hazarded a pitched battle: he advanced in three columns to attack the archduke; the battle was fought with wonderful obstinacy, and the French had almost proved victorious, when the archduke, dismounting himself, led his infantry to the charge, and, by his presence and example, inspirited his soldiers to prodigious efforts: still, however, the French were unbroken; when the archduke, sending some battalions of grenadiers, charged them in flank, and throwing the enemy into confusion, completed the victory. The next day the republican general endeavoured to renew the combat; but, finding his army so much reduced [d] as to be incapable of making head against the enemy, he retreated, and recrossed the Rhine; and thus ended the French expedition to Germany in 1799. Jourdain was dismissed from the command of the army, and Massena was appointed generalissimo of the whole French force from the Alpine frontiers of Italy to Mentz. The army immediately under himself in the beginning of the campaign, made considerable advances in the Grisons; but, after the retreat of Jourdain, the force sent from the Austrian army on the Danube to assist Bellegarde and Hotze on the

Battle between the archduke Charles and Jourdain:

the French are defeated, and forced to evacuate Germany.

Advances of Massena in the Grisons.

[d] Annual Register, 1799, chap. xiii.

CHAP. LXIV.

1799. By the defeat of Jourdain he is obliged to retreat.

Upper Rhine, rendered the imperialists so powerful, that Massena found it necessary to return to the left bank.[e] But the subsequent operations in Switzerland were so much affected by the transactions in Italy, that it is necessary to turn the narrative to Cisalpine operations.

THE republican forces in Italy, at the commencement of 1799, consisted of nearly eighty thousand French soldiers, and more than fifty thousand Poles, Swiss, Piedmontese, Genoese, Romans, or Neapolitans; they were formed into two armies, one of which was called the army of Italy, and the other of Naples: the army of Italy, consisting of ninety thousand, occupied the Modenese, the state of Genoa, Piedmont, Milanese, the Valteline, and the countries of Brescia, Bergamo, and Mantua. This dispersion of force, which a general hatred of the French rendered necessary, reduced the number of men who could be employed in active operations to about fifty thousand.[f] They were in cantonments on the banks of the lake of Garda, of the Mincio, and of the Po; from the frontier of the Tyrol to the mouth of the Po. The army of Naples, consisting of about forty thousand, occupied the capital, and the conquered part of his Sicilian majesty's dominions; as also Rome, and the different provinces of the church. The object proposed through the army of Italy was, general co-operation with the army of Switzerland in attacking the Austrian dominions, from the Adriatic, through Stiria and Carinthia, in the direction to Vienna. Thus, if Jourdain had been successful, the grand line of approach, in three divisions, towards Vienna, would have extended from the gulf of Venice to the confines of Belgium. The emperor's ministers having taken a view of the various causes of discomfiture in the former part of the war, found

[e] Annual Register, 1799, ch. xiv.
[f] Ibid. ch. xv.

treachery

treachery to have prevailed among Austrian officers; and dismissing all those whom there were grounds to suspect, substituted others in their place. The French had also derived great benefit from their train of artillery: the Austrian counsellors in this campaign took care that the imperial forces should equal their adversaries in ordnance. Scherer, the French commander, took the field in March: on the 26th of that month, encountering the Austrians commanded by general Kray, he was repulsed and compelled to fly towards Mantua. Successively defeated, the republicans were driven from the left bank of the Adige. The Italians now joining the Austrian army, assisted in annoying the retreating French, and all the territories that had been extorted from the Venetians were evacuated; when marshal Suwarrow, with twenty-five thousand men, joining the Austrians, took the chief command.

The Austrians invade Italy.

Successes.

They recover the north-east of Italy.

Leaving Kray to invest the fortresses of Peschiera and Mantua, the Russian commander pursued the enemy that had retired to the Milanese: overtaking their army at Adda, on the 27th of April, he entirely defeated them, and compelled them to evacuate the Milanese. Peschiera was, meanwhile, captured by Kray; and, except Mantua, the whole north-east of Italy was recovered from the republicans. Meanwhile Moreau was placed at the head of the French; who, seeing the force of the enemy, determined on a plan of defence, by occupying successive posts and defiles, which should prevent the confederates from any material advantage, and retard their progress until effectual reinforcements might arrive. He therefore occupied a position which secured a communication between France and Switzerland on the one hand, and Macdonald on the other.

Arrival of marshal Suwarrow with the Russian army.

Military operations and victories.

Skilful movement of Moreau.

General Macdonald had been prevented from extending his conquests in Naples, by the gradual diminution of his army. By the threats of descent from

Affairs of Naples; the French evacuate the

CHAP. LXIV.

1799. south of Italy, and concentrate their force in the north.

from the Turks, the Russians, and the English, who hovered over the coasts of the upper and lower seas, he had been obliged to content himself with securing the submission of the capital, putting the coast in a state of defence, and completing the reduction of the two provinces of Abruzzo and Capitana, and of the two principalities. Such was the situation of Macdonald, when he received from the directory an order to evacuate the kingdom of Naples, and join Moreau. According to his instructions, he deposited all power in the hands of the patriots; leaving, for their support, republican corps that had been raised in the country, and the garrisons of St. Elmo, of Capua, and Gaeta. Having traversed the Roman estates, he arrived at Florence on the 24th of May; and having there joined several detachments of republican troops, he found himself at the head of twenty-five thousand men. With this force Macdonald proposed to join Moreau, who was at a hundred and fifty miles distance; and to overcome the multiplied obstacles which were presented both by the nature of the country and the enemy. To effect an union with his colleague, he had two roads, on different sides of the Appenines: the one goes along the Riviera di Ponente, and is known under the name of the Corniche; but it could not admit of the passage of artillery or even of baggage. The second road was that between the Appenines and the Po, across the duchies of Modena, Parma, and Placentia. This last route, though the more circuitous, he chose for his march; but secured the road by the Corniche, in order to retain that communication with Moreau. Suwarrow saw that if Macdonald should join Moreau, he would have a much more formidable force to encounter than any which he had before combated in the present campaign, and applied for reinforcements. Accordingly, eleven thousand Russians, and fourteen thousand Austrians,

commanded

commanded by general Bellegarde, arrived to his assistance in the beginning of June. The month of June was occupied by Macdonald and Moreau in attempting to effect a junction; and extraordinary efforts of generalship were exerted by the three commanders, both in forming schemes, and in reciprocally disconcerting antagonists. Suwarrow proposed to combine defensive with offensive operations, to occupy a strong line of posts on the west, in order to check the advances of Moreau, and on the east to bend his principal efforts against Macdonald. Both Moreau and Macdonald, on the other hand, wished severally to avoid a general engagement, that their strength might not be impaired when they should be united. Macdonald, after several conflicts with detachments of imperialists, was, on the 16th of June, advanced as far as the river Trebia[g]; and Suwarrow had now reached the same place. On the 17th, a course of battles commenced, which, lasting three days, called forth from both the Russian and French generals, efforts not unworthy of the Carthaginian hero[h] who first gave celebrity to the scene of action. Macdonald, being at length defeated, was for several weeks retarded from accomplishing his purpose, and his force was considerably reduced. Hastening back to meet Moreau, Suwarrow compelled that general to retreat. Macdonald meanwhile had retraced his own course back to Tuscany: foiled in the first route which he had for so good reason chosen, there now remained for him only the left hand tract by the Corniche, impassable, as we have seen, to baggage and artillery. He had no other means of saving his artillery and baggage, including the spoils of Italy, than by sending them by sea, and this was a very dangerous expedient,

CHAP. LXIV. 1799.

[g] Annual Register, 1799, ch. xvi.

[h] See account of the battle of Trebia, between Hannibal and the Roman consul Sempronius, Livy, book xxi. near the end.

CHAP. LXIV. 1799.

as the English men of war hovered over the coast. Impelled however by necessity, he sent his various stores to Leghorn to be embarked. Meanwhile, Suwarrow, having compelled Moreau to retreat, endeavoured to improve his victory over Macdonald by reconquering Tuscany. To this attempt the dispositions of the inhabitants were extremely favourable; and they were farther inspirited by the English envoy, Mr. Windham, to profit by the disasters of the French, re-assert their independence, and re-establish their sovereign. About 25,000 took arms with this intention, and were soon joined by very considerable reinforcements. Diminished as his force was, Macdonald might easily have matched a feeble and desultory multitude; yet such an attempt was not at present his object. Freed from every incumbrance, he now took the rout of the Corniche, and made his way towards Moreau, whom, near the end of July, he joined in the neighbourhood of Genoa, with the remainder of his army, now reduced to about thirteen thousand men: the whole army of the French in Italy amounted to about fifty thousand. During this period, Mantua and Alessandria[1] had been captured by the imperialists; and while affairs were so prosperous in the north, they were no less flourishing in the south of Italy. After the evacuation of Naples by Macdonald, cardinal Ruffo, at the head of the royalist army, consisting of more than twenty thousand men, and some hundreds of Russians, defeated the republican levies of men which were opposed to him, and marched against the capital; which, on the 20th of June, surrendered by capitulation. A few days after an army of allies came into port, animated by the activity and directed by the talents of admiral Nelson, and his gallant and able second, captain Trowbridge. A body of

[1] Annual Register, 1799, ch. xv.

English,

English, Russian, and Portuguese troops, having obtained possession of the castles of Ovo and Nuovo, on the 26th, under the command of captain Trowbridge, invested the castle of St. Elmo, on the 29th. The garrison, unable to resist such a force, and such commanders, capitulated: the other towns successively surrendered; and the king of the two Sicilies was restored to his throne and dominions by the British hero, whose splendid achievements had excited and invigorated, in various parts of the globe, the most courageous efforts for vindicating the independence of nations against the boundless ambition of revolutionary conquest. From Naples lord Nelson turned his attention to the papal territories, and sent captain Trowbridge with a small armament towards Rome. The inhabitants joyfully flocked to the standard of their deliverers: the republicans, finding resistance hopeless, surrendered by capitulation, and evacuated the Roman dominions before the end of July. Tuscany was by this time completely recovered. Piedmont was chiefly in the possession of the confederates; and the French, who in the end of March had been masters of all Italy, now occupied only a small corner in the north-west. In the beginning of August, Joubert was appointed to command in the place of Moreau, who was sent to head the army on the Rhine. The confederates were now employed in the siege of Tortona, the last fortress which remained to the republicans in Piedmont; and twenty thousand men were on their march from Alessandria and Mantua to join Suwarrow. Joubert, desirous of making one attempt to relieve Tortona, resolved to attack the Russian general before the reinforcements should arrive. The French amounted to about forty thousand men: the combined force was more considerable; and, besides the superiority of the latter in point of numbers, they were choice troops, better disciplined,

The king of the two Sicilies restored by Nelson.

Rome is delivered from the republicans by Trowbridge.

CHAP. LXIV.

plined, and flushed with recent victories. The republicans, on the 15th of August, prepared to offer battle; and with that view, were formed in an encampment placed upon the hills which are situated behind the town of Novi; and, though not very high, yet are extremely steep. Notwithstanding the strength of this position, Suwarrow, the next morning at five o'clock, advanced to engage the enemy. The republicans received the attack of the imperial troops with their usual firmness and intrepidity, and drove back their centre and right wing three several times. The French appeared to be immoveable in their position, and sustained with equal valour repeated charges: at noon they confidently expected the victory; but sixteen battalions of Austrians arriving on the right flank of the enemy, made such an impression, that it was thrown into confusion; and general Joubert, endeavouring to rally his men, was himself mortally wounded. Deprived of their commander, and outnumbered by their opponents, the republicans were at length completely overpowered. Suwarrow obtained a most signal victory, which finally decided the fate of the campaign. Tortona was captured; Piedmont was entirely recovered; and of the acquisitions of Bonaparte in Italy, there now remained to the French only the small territory of Genoa. Suwarrow having so effectually accomplished the purposes of his command in Italy, prepared to carry his victorious arms against the republicans in Switzerland.

1799. Battle of Novi, and victory of Suwarrow.

Italy is all reduced, except Genoa.

Campaign in Switzerland and the Grisons.

WHILE the French by the combined armies were driven from their Cisalpine conquests, Massena was engaged in the most strenuous efforts on the Rhine. The successes in Italy invigorated the allies in their operations among the Alps, and compelled Massena to act upon the defensive. He was driven from the Grisons, and the Austrians crossing the Rhine, established themselves on the left bank.

The French are driven from the Grisons.

bank. Advancing in the career of victory, the Germans drove the French from the strong and important position at St. Gothard, established themselves in Switzerland, and opened with the army of Italy a line of communication, which, on the other side, extended through Suabia to the banks of the Maine; so that from Mentz to Italy, there was a chain of forces advancing against the French republic, of which the army of the Alps constituted the central link. During the month of June the imperialists proceeded rapidly into Switzerland, and, after the most obstinate conflicts, made themselves masters of Zurich. But considerable detachments of the Austrians having been drafted to Italy and a very great body of Russians being still expected, the archduke, without farther pursuing his conquests, contented himself with preserving his acquisitions, until the allies should arrive. The present force of Massena being too much reduced for immediately resuming offensive movements, he employed himself in preparations. This state of inaction continued, with no important interruption on either side, from the end of June till near the end of August. The exertions and successes of the confederates meanwhile produced accessions to the alliance. The duke of Wirtemberg and duke of Bavaria, the greatest secondary princes of southern Germany, joined the house of Austria in its efforts against the republicans. The soul of the combination was England, which afforded money to assist the Austrians, prompt the Russians, and stimulate the German princes. The great allied powers continued their attempts to induce the king of Prussia to take a share in a combination which they represented as necessary to his own safety. This prince, however, still more jealous of Austria than of France, would not join in exertions by which he conceived, that if successful, Austria would be ultimately aggrandized; and if unsuc-

CHAP. LXIV.

1799.

Successes of the Austrians.

cessful,

CHAP. LXIV.

1799.

cessful, the disasters would fall upon himself. Against revolutionary doctrines and designs, he thought that the best antidote was to preserve for his people the comforts of peace, which prevented the necessity of oppressive imposts, promoted industry and prosperity, and thereby precluded the most powerful causes of discontent: he therefore persisted in avoiding all interference in the contest. The secondary and other princes of northern Germany were retained in their neutrality by the influence and power of the king of Prussia. The elector of Bavaria, and the duke of Wirtemberg, respectively engaged to furnish ten thousand and six thousand men, for which they were to be subsidised by England.

From this time, it is believed, that a difference subsisted between the courts of Vienna and Petersburgh concerning farther operations. The Austrians, considering their acquisitions as *ends*, wished to preserve what they had obtained.[k] The Russians, regarding their conquests merely as *means* of re-establishing the house of Bourbon, desired to pursue the successful career. Britain, without avowing the same object as Russia, agreed in her policy, and was anxious to press as extensively and effectually as possible upon France. This diversity of views and schemes between the two imperial courts soon manifested itself in the belligerent operations.

The French government, in order to preserve Switzerland, proposed to create a diversion on the western borders of Germany, and the execution of this project was the object of the army which Moreau was called from Italy to command. In consequence of this project a powerful host of republicans, passing the Rhine, invaded Germany near the end of August, and entering Suabia, levied various contributions. About this time,

[k] Annual Register, 1799, chap. xv.

general

general Korsakow arrived in Switzerland, with a great body of Russians; and Suwarrow, after his signal victories in Italy, was advancing to the same quarter. The Russian general had expected that the archduke Charles was in Switzerland, to co-operate with his efforts; but that prince, when the republicans entered the empire, marched towards the Lower Rhine, in order to repress the incursion of the French; and the defence of Switzerland was now chiefly left to the Russians. The force of the allies being so much weakened by the departure of the archduke, Korsakow, and Hotze (left commander of the Austrians in Switzerland), contracted their plan of offensive operations. It was now projected merely to recover the possession of the small cantons, and compel Massena to retire to the Aar. Korsakow had several obstinate conflicts with the republicans, with various success; but in the course of the battles, the French had acted with so much skill in the management of their positions, that the Russians, when they were apparently victorious by their intrepid and impetuous valour, were really surrounded from the masterly skill of their antagonists. At Zurich, Korsakow was encompassed on all sides; and Massena, knowing the terrible prowess of the Russian soldiers, endeavoured to profit by the advantage which he had gained, without driving them to desperation. He had it in his power to intercept their retreat, but not with a force sufficient to overcome them, if driven to extremity; he therefore left, by the road to Winterthur, one outlet unobstructed. Meanwhile he offered to Korsakow a capitulation, by which he might quietly retreat to the Rhine; but this proposal was totally disregarded. Korsakow began his retreat by the outlet left for him; and Massena, with much pleasure, permitted his departure without attempting any obstruction. The Russian however having

Massena begins to restore the affairs of the French;

CHAP. LXIV.

1799.

having merely begun his march in the undisputed course, suddenly took a different direction, and attacked a great body of the republicans who were advantageously posted on heights that commanded the road. The French, though they had not expected an attack, yet soon prepared themselves for skilful resistance. They suffered the Russians to approach, and then opened a tremendous fire of musketry and artillery. The Russians fought with astonishing courage, but without concert and design, and were therefore totally unequal to the valour, skill, and ability of their adversaries. Overwhelmed along the whole of their column by the grape shot of the French, whose flying artillery operated on this occasion with terrible effect, they rushed repeatedly with fixed bayonets on the enemy; and forced them, for some moments, to give way. But, as the prodigies of valour performed by the Russian infantry, neither were, nor indeed could be turned to any account by the superior officers, in their present circumstances, they served only to render the defeat more complete, as well as sanguinary. General Korsakow, with the remains of his army, forced forward and passed the Rhine. Such was the situation of affairs when marshal Suwarrow arrived in Switzerland, in the month of September. The Russian general having successfully executed his march into Switzerland, expected a very powerful co-operation, which would enable him to be equally successful as he had been in Italy. Not apprised of the circumstances which had compelled the retreat of Korsakow, he fully relied on the aid of that general, as well as of the Austrians; and in that confidence advanced into the country which was now possessed by the enemy. But, on penetrating into Switzerland, he found that his countrymen were departed, and that he had very little co-operation to expect from the Austrians. He was now obliged to act

defeats Korsakow, the Russian general.

Suwarrow marches into Switzerland,

on

1799.

on the defensive, and to retreat towards the Rhine. Korsakow, rallying his troops, recrossed the river to support his countrymen; and various bloody engagements took place between the Russians and republicans. Suwarrow, though compelled to retire, never suffered a defeat; and at last in October, seeing no assistance from the Austrians, passed the Rhine.

not properly supported by the Austrians, he retires towards Germany.

PRINCE CHARLES having deemed it necessary, instead of co-operating with the Russian generals, to march into Suabia, there had to encounter the French army. After various and indecisive operations, he was informed of the misfortunes in Switzerland, and departed towards Suwarrow. Between the army which he left, and the republicans, repeated conflicts took place, without any important event; and the French repassed the Rhine: and thus the Rhine, from its source to the ocean, again became the boundary of the republic.

THE departure of the archduke for Suabia was, by military critics, deemed unnecessary, as a detachment might have sufficed. This movement, however, was not imputed to an error of the commander, but to political jealousy of the cabinet. The event of the campaign in Italy was favourable to the allies; but in Switzerland, they lost in the end the advantages of the beginning; and besides the causes and circumstances of the discomfiture, tended to break the combination through which only they could succeed against France. Paul, about this time, published a manifesto, declaring his intention to restore the ancient government of France, and to replace all the conquests of the republic on the footing which they were on before the war. If the German princes would co-operate with him, he would exert his whole strength by sea and land; but if they withheld their assistance, he would withdraw his forces.[1]

[1] See State Papers, Paul's declaration, September 15th, O. S. 1799.

WHILE

CHAP. LXIV.

1799.

The British fleets block up the ports of France, Spain, and Holland.

WHILE the allies were thus engaged in endeavouring to make an impression upon France, Britain undertook an expedition to detach the Batavian republic from its connection with the French; and to extricate her ancient ally from that domination which she naturally supposed a great portion of the inhabitants to bear only from necessity. The efforts of our illustrious commanders, in the two preceding years, had so reduced the maritime strength of France and her dependencies, that though both Spain and she had a great number of ships, they had no efficient naval force; and their harbours, during 1799, were under a state of blockade.

Expedition of the duke of York to Holland.

THUS free from the apprehensions of maritime interruption or invasion, government determined to send a powerful armament to Holland. The chief command was conferred on the duke of York: the land force was to consist of about thirty thousand men, including a body of Russian auxiliaries. On the 13th of August, sir Ralph Abercrombie set sail from Deal with the first part of the army, and a fleet, commanded by rear-admiral Mitchel, joining lord Duncan in the north seas, on the 21st they came in sight of the Dutch coast; but from weather extremely boisterous, notwithstanding the season of the year, could not attempt to land till the 27th. Admiral Mitchel, with very great skill and ability, covered the landing of the troops, which sir Ralph superintended with equal intrepidity and vigour. Inspired by mutual confidence, sameness of wish, and a thorough reliance on the courage, professional knowledge, and wisdom of their respective leaders, both the army and the navy acted with the most perfect unanimity.[m] The enemy posted at the Helder had made a vigorous opposition to our troops; but

Troops land at the Helder.

Battle and victory.

[m] In the strong professional language of admiral Mitchel, "*they pulled heartily together.*"

were

CHAP. LXIV.

1799.

were entirely defeated; and some days afterwards, the Dutch fleet in the Texel surrendered to admiral Mitchel. From this time to the 13th of September, the rest of the British forces, together with the Russians, arrived; and his royal highness having that day joined the army, found himself at the head of thirty thousand men.[n] The prince resolved on a general attack; and on the 19th, advanced with his army, extending in four columns from the right to the left, towards the enemy, who were posted at Alkmaer. The column to the extremity of the right, consisted chiefly of the Russians in twelve battalions, assisted by the seventh light dragoons, and general Manners's brigades, and was commanded by the Russian lieutenant-general De Hermann, and extended to the sand-hills on the coast near the famous Camperdown; on which heights a column of the enemy was very advantageously posted. The second division, commanded by lieutenant-general Dundas, consisted of two squadrons of the eleventh light dragoons, two brigades of foot-guards, and major-general his highness prince William's brigade. Its object was to force the enemy's position at Walmen-huysen and Schoreldam, and to co-operate with the column under lieutenant-general De Hermann. The third column, commanded by lieutenant-general sir James Pulteney, consisted of two squadrons of the eleventh light dragoons, major-general Don's brigade, and major-general Coote's brigade. This column was intended to take possession of Ouds Carspel at the head of the Lange dyke, a great road leading to Alkmaer.[o] The fourth and left column, under the command of lieutenant-general sir Ralph Abercrombie, consisted of two squadrons of the

Dutch fleet surrenders.

The British troops advance to Alkmaer.

Battle of September 19th.

[n] See the duke of York's letters to Mr. Dundas, London Gazette, September 19th.

[o] See the duke of York's letter to Mr. Dundas, London Gazette Extraordinary, September 24th, 1799.

eighteenth

CHAP. LXIV. 1799.

eighteenth light dragoons, major-general the earl of Chatham's brigade, major-general Moore's brigade, major-general the earl of Cavan's brigade, first battalion of British grenadiers of the line, first battalion of the light infantry of the line, and the twenty-third and fifty-fifth regiments, under colonel Macdonald, and was destined to turn the enemy's right on the Zuyder Zea. To the attainment of these manifold and important objects, the most formidable obstacles presented themselves. To the right, on which side the Russians were to advance, the country was almost covered with woods, especially near the village of Bergen, where the principal force of the enemy was placed. The Russians, advancing with an intrepidity that overlooked the powerful resistance they were to meet, were, by their impetuous courage, transported beyond the bounds of that order which would have ensured safety and success; and, after a most valiant contest, obliged to retire with considerable loss. Both the second and third columns had also great difficulties to encounter in the deep ditches and canals by which the scene of their operations was intersected. The second, under general Dundas, after renewing the battle with promising success, was at length obliged to retire. Lieutenant-general sir James Pulteney, with the third, effected his object in carrying by storm the post of Ouds Carspel at the head of the Lange dyke; but the disappointment of the right preventing our army from profiting by this advantage, it became expedient to withdraw the third column. The same circumstances led to the necessity of recalling the corps under lieutenant-general sir Ralph Abercrombie, who had proceeded without interruption to Hoorn, of which city he had taken possession, together with its garrison. The whole of the army returned to its former position. Autumn 1729 was remarkably rainy, and even tempestuous; such weather in a country

CHAP. LXIV.

1799. Battle of Bergen, October 2d.

naturally so wet, and also so intersected by canals and ditches, for some time suspended the operations of the British army. On the 2d of October, the storm having abated, the British army commenced an attack on the whole of the enemy's line. A severe and obstinate action ensued, which lasted from six in the morning until the same hour at night. The right wing of the British army was commanded by sir Ralph Abercrombie, the centre division by general Dundas, and the left by major-general Burrard: all of whom eminently distinguished themselves on this day, by their cool courage and excellent conduct. [p] The first impression was made on the adverse line, by the right wing of our army; the next by the centre; and lastly, the left wing also overcame all resistance. The enemy being entirely defeated, retired in the night from the positions which they had occupied on the Lange dyke, the Koe dyke at Bergen, and on the extensive range of sand-hills between this last and Egmont-op-Zee. On the night after the battle, the British troops lay on their arms; and on the 3d of October moved forwards, and occupied the positions of Egmont-op-Hoof, Egmont-op-Zee, the Lange dyke, Alkmaer, and Bergen.

The enemy's force was computed to be about twenty-five thousand men, of which by far the greater part were French. The duke of York, in the account he gave of the action of the 2d of October, bestowed warm and liberal praise on the whole army under his command. "Under the Divine Providence," says his royal highness, "this signal victory obtained over the enemy, is to be ascribed to the animated and persevering exertions which have been at all times the characteristics of the British soldier, and which, on no occasion, were ever more eminently displayed: nor has it often

[p] See letter of the duke of York to Mr. Dundas, London Gazette extraordinary, October 24th, 1799.

CHAP. LXIV. 1799.

fallen to the lot of any general to have such just cause of acknowledgment for distinguished support. I cannot in sufficient terms express the obligations I owe to general sir Ralph Abercrombie and lieutenant-general Dundas, for the able manner in which they conducted their respective columns; whose success is in no small degree to be attributed to their personal exertions and example: the former had two horses shot under him." Very distinguished praise is also bestowed by his highness on colonel Macdonald, lord Paget, major-general Coote, general sir James Pulteney, and many other officers. The loss sustained by the enemy exceeded four thousand men killed, about three hundred prisoners, seven pieces of cannon, and a great many tumbrils. But the victory obtained by the British army was dearly purchased by the loss of about fifteen hundred men killed and wounded. [q] The exhausted state of the troops, from the vast difficulties and fatigues they had to encounter, prevented the British commander from taking that advantage of the enemy's retreat, which, in any other country, and under any other circumstances, would have been the consequence of the operations of the 2d of October.

THE French general having taken post at the narrow isthmus between Beverwick and the Zuyder Zee, the duke of York determined, if possible, to force him from thence, before he should have an opportunity of strengthening by works the short and very defenceless line which he occupied; and to oblige him still further to retire, before he could be joined by the reinforcements which he was informed were upon their march. Preparatively, therefore, to a general and forward movement, he ordered the advanced posts, which the army had

[q] Among the wounded was the brave and accomplished marquis of Huntley; who for many months suffered very severely, but at length recovered.

taken

taken on the 3d, in front of Alkmaer and the other places already mentioned, to be pushed forward; which was done accordingly on the 4th. At first, little opposition was shewn, and the British succeeded in taking possession of the villages of Schermerhoorn, Archer Sloot, Limnen, Baccum, and of a position on the sand-hills near Wyck-op-Zee. The column, consisting of the Russian troops, under the command of major-general D'Essen, attempted to gain a height in front of their intended advanced post at Baccum which was material to the security of that point; but was vigorously opposed by a strong body of the enemy, which obliged sir Ralph Abercrombie to move up for the support of that column with the reserve of his corps. The enemy, on their part, advanced their whole force: the action became general along the line from Limnen to the sea, and was maintained on both sides until night, when the Batavian and French army retired, leaving the British masters of the field of battle. This conflict was as severe as any of those that had been fought since the arrival of our troops in Holland; and, in proportion to the numbers engaged, attended with as great a loss. Of the British six hundred were killed or wounded; of the Russians, not less than one thousand two hundred. The loss of the enemy was also very great in the killed, wounded, and prisoners, which fell into our hands to the number of five hundred. The post to which the British army directed its march was Haerlem: but intelligence was received from the prisoners taken in this action, that the enemy, who had been just reinforced by six thousand infantry, had strengthened the position of Beverwick, and thrown up very strong works in its rear; and farther, that they had stationed a large force at Parmirind, in an almost inaccessible position, covered by an inundated country; the debouches from which were strongly fortified, and in

CHAP. LXIV. 1799.

Battle of Limnen.

CHAP. LXIV. 1799.

the hands of the enemy; and farther still, that, as our army advanced, this corps was placed in our rear. Informed of all these circumstances, the British commander naturally paused. The obstacles here enumerated might have been overcome by the persevering courage of the troops under his command, had not the state of the weather, the ruined condition of the roads, and the total want of the necessary supplies, arising from the above causes, presented additional difficulties which demanded the most serious consideration. From the people, instead of co-operation, he experienced hostility; indeed, if they had been disposed, of which they manifested no appearance, fear of the French republicans would have impelled them to distress the British troops. The duke of York, therefore, having maturely weighed the situation in which the army under his command was thus placed, thought it advisable, with the concurrence of general Abercrombie and the lieutenant-generals of the army, to withdraw the troops from this advanced position, and fall back to Shagenbrug. There the enemy harassed our line of defence by daily, though partial attacks; the most serious of which was made by general Daendels in person. That general, on the 10th of October, assaulted the right wing of the British forces, upon an advanced post near Winckle, under the command of prince William of Gloucester; and with six thousand men and six pieces of cannon, endeavoured to force this post by every exertion. To resist this formidable attack, the prince had only twelve hundred men, and two pieces of cannon; yet he obliged the Dutch general to retreat, with the loss of two hundred men killed, and one French general. But general Daendals being almost immediately reinforced by four thousand Dutch troops, the prince of Gloucester was under the necessity of falling back to Cohorn. The loss

The British troops fall back.

of

of the English in this action did not exceed three killed and about twelve wounded. The prince, during the action, had his horse shot under him; but he received no injury himself, though exposed to the greatest personal danger, under a heavy fire, being frequently in the front of the line, animating the exertion of his troops by his example.

Indecisive successes in the Zuyder Zee.

THE efforts of our marine, under the conduct of admiral Mitchel, in the Zuyder Zee, and on the other parts of the coast, were continued, amidst these transactions on land, with unabated activity. Many gunboats, and several light ships of war, were taken from the enemy; and an attack that, on the 11th of October, they made on the town of Lemmer, which had come into our possession, as above related, was gallantly repulsed by the British sailors and marines, under the command of captain Boorder of the Wolverene bombship.

Difficult situation of the army.

ON considering the various obstacles to his expedition, the duke of York dispatched his secretary, colonel Brownrig, to London, in order to give a circumstantial account of the state of affairs in Holland, and to receive his majesty's farther instructions. The colonel soon returned to the army, with orders for the immediate evacuation of Holland. Transports were sent for this purpose, and works were thrown up on the commanding heights of Keckdown, to cover the embarkation of our troops. On the 17th of October, a suspension of arms in Holland was agreed on between the captain-general of the English and Russian army, on the one part, and the generals Brune and Daendels, on the other. It was stipulated by the parties, that all prisoners should be given up on both sides, those on parole, as well as others. It was further stipulated, as the price of permission to the British troops to re-embark on board their transports without molestation, that eight thousand of the seamen, whether Batavian republicans or

Suspension of arms.

CHAP. LXIV.

1799.

British troops withdraw from Holland.

French, who were prisoners in England, should be given up to the French government. The combined English and Russian army was to evacuate Holland before the end of November. No time was lost in the embarkation of the British and Russian troops; and, together with these, a great number of Dutch royalists, to the amount of near two thousand, came to England. The Russians were quartered in Jersey and Guernsey.

Capture of Surinam.

THE efforts of the British nation in the contests with the Batavian republic were, as usually in the history of Britain, more successful at sea than on land; and not only in the northern sea, but beyond the Atlantic. The rich colony of Surinam, in which there is so striking an assemblage of luxuriancy of soil, accumulation of riches, and luxury of manners, was added to our colonial possessions.[r] This Dutch settlement voluntarily surrendered, August 20th, to lord Hugh Seymour, commander in chief of his majesty's land and sea forces in the Leeward and Windward Caribbee islands, who conducted against it a small squadron of ships, with troops collected from Grenada and St. Lucie. The principal articles of the capitulation were nearly the same that, in an earlier period of the war, had been granted to French islands. The inhabitants were to enjoy full security to their persons, and the free exercise of their religion, with the immediate and entire possession of their private property, whether on shore or afloat. All ships of war, artillery, provisions, and stores in the public magazines and warehouses, as well as the effects of every description, belonging to the public, were to be given up to his Britannic majesty, in the state they then were; regular lists being taken by officers appointed for this purpose, by each of the contracting parties. In case the colony of Surinam should remain in the possession

[r] See London Gazette, Oct. 15th, 1799.

of

of his Britannic majesty, at the conclusion of a general peace, it should enjoy every right and every commercial privilege enjoyed by the British colonies in the West Indies. The troops then in Surinam, as well as the officers belonging to the different corps serving under its present government, should have it in their option to enter into his Britannic majesty's service, on the same footing, with respect to appointments and pay, as the rest of his army, provided that they took the oath of fidelity and allegiance to his majesty, which they wouldbe required to take.

Short meeting of parliament in September.

THE situation of affairs on the continent, and the part which the British government had undertaken to act in the confederation against the French republic, caused a short meeting of parliament, at so early a season as the month of September. The object of this extraordinary convocation was to pass a law for extending the voluntary service of the militia, while the regular forces were employed on the expedition; and also to vote some pecuniary supplies on account of the unforeseen expences. The projected bill respecting the militia, permitted three-fifths of that body to enlist into such corps of regulars as his majesty should appoint; each volunteer to receive ten guineas, to serve in Europe only, and to continue attached to the corps in which he first entered. If companies (not less than eighty privates) should volunteer together, they might continue to form the same corps, and either to be joined into separate battalions; or if their number did not admit of such an arrangement, they were to be attached to regular regiments. Every officer belonging to such a company of militia should have temporary rank in the regulars equal to that which he had before held; if the corps was reduced, he should enjoy either half pay, or permanent military rank, and full pay like any military officer. The bill, being accompanied

CHAP. LXIV.

1799.

with numerous regulations concerning the mode of its execution, underwent considerable opposition, as tending to diminish by donative the constitutional and patriotic force of the militia, and to increase the standing army dependent on the crown. The object of Mr. Pitt had uniformly been (his opponents said) to extend the influence and authority of the monarchical branch of the constitution beyond its due and salutary bounds. His system of policy, in order to effect this general end, had been to propose some special or temporary evil to be removed, or good to be attained, from the restriction of popular privileges, and the enlargement of kingly force. The pretext for suspending the habeas corpus, was the existence of a conspiracy; as if a conspiracy, if it had really existed, might not have been discovered and crushed by the constitutional laws of the land. The pretext for extending the laws of treason, and controling popular assemblies, was the existence of seditious meetings and rebellious designs. The pretended causes had totally ceased, but the laws, so conducive to the real purpose of ministers, still continued. The ostensible reason for alluring the militia to become soldiers was, to give effect to our military operations abroad; the real intention was, at once to increase the standing army and ministerial patronage. These objections, though strongly urged, were, by a great majority of the house, deemed futile; and the bill was passed into a law.

Supplies.

The supplies granted at present amounted to between six and seven millions, including two million five hundred thousand to be raised by exchequer bills. Bills were also passed for granting relief to West India merchants, and for supporting commercial credit.

Parliament is prorogued.

These were the chief acts of this short session, which lasted only from the twenty-fourth of September till the twelfth of October.

CHAP. LXV.

Ultimate purpose of the French expedition to Egypt — their views concerning India. — Tippoo Sultan recovers a considerable part of his former strength — forms a new confederacy for driving the English from India — his schemes are discovered; and he is admonished by the British government to relinquish his projects — disregards the admonition — British armies from the two coasts take the field — Tippoo retires into Seringapatam — British army storm that city — death of Tippoo, and reduction of Mysore — humane and wise policy of the British governor. — Proceedings in Egypt — situation of Bonaparte after the battle of Aboukir — difficulties with which he had to contend — exercise his extraordinary genius — military progress — battle of the pyramids — he addresses the passions and prejudices of the Egyptians — he promises the French will protect them from the Mamalukes — he professes a respect for the Mahomedan faith — plan of Bonaparte to amalgamate the prejudices of the Mahomedans with the pretensions of the French — his undertaking more difficult than the undertaking of Mahomet — Civil and political administration — his innovations are disregarded by many of the Egyptians — discontents — are quelled — Bonaparte proposes to march into Syria — object of this design — march and progress of the French army — Bonaparte defeats the Syrians — captures Joppa — advances towards Acre — state and importance of that fortress — situation — the French army invests the city — sir Sidney Smith, with a British squadron, arrives at Acre — captures a French flotilla — he perceives the importance of here repressing the progress of the French — his masterly view of the situation of affairs — his first purpose to inspirit the Turks — he diffuses moral energy into their physical strength — the French effect breaches in the wall — assaults on the town — inspirited and headed by the English, the Turks repel the attack — grand assault by the French — Smith employs his sailors as soldiers — efficacious efforts and example of this heroic band — the French are entirely vanquished

vanquished — retreat from Acre — Bonaparte returns to Egypt — the Turks send an army to Aboukir, but are defeated — measures of Bonaparte for the improvement of Egypt.

CHAP. LXV.

1799. Ultimate purpose of the French expedition to Egypt; concerning India.

THE contest between the French republic and Britain and her allies was not confined to Europe and the conterminous ocean, but extended in a diagonal line to India and its environs. The grand object of the expedition from Toulon was to give a fatal blow to the commercial and maritime greatness of England. Among the various measures pursued, or suggested for this end, none seemed to the French more effectual for the execution of their designs, than the formation of alliances with the native powers of India. Greatly as Tippoo Sultan had been reduced in the war with lord Cornwallis, he had not been entirely subdued. His ambition, though so severely repressed, was not totally crushed; and he still cherished hopes of ultimately succeeding in his gratification. The humiliating conditions to which he had been obliged to submit, inflamed his pride to resentment and revenge, and co-operated with his love of power to stimulate hostility against England. He watchfully observed every circumstance in the politics of Asia, or of Europe, which might be improved into the means of humbling the British power in India. Like the Carthaginians, after the signal overthrow that closed their second war with the Romans, though compelled to deliver hostages, to pay a tribute, to confine themselves within much narrower limits than they possessed at the beginning of the war, instead of succumbing under misfortune, he employed peace in recovering his strength and improving his resources. It is customary for the princes of Hindostan, according to their faculties and views, to entertain different portions of European troops, for the purpose of training, animating,

and

and conducting their own people in wars with their neighbours; in much the same manner that the different princes and states of Italy, enervated after a lapse of time since the irruption of their ancestors from the north, by a delicious climate and exuberant soil, were wont to retain leaders of bands[a], with their followers, from the hardy regions beyond the Alpine mountains. Tippoo, very soon after the pacification of 1792, began to increase his European military establishment. All European adventurers, especially the French, found ready admittance into his service, and as much encouragement as can be given under a despotic form of government. The common enmity of the sultan and the French to the British nation, formed a kind of tacit alliance between those two powers, and a predisposition to define and ratify it by express stipulation, whenever an opportunity should be presented in the vicissitudes of Asia and of Europe. The preponderating power of Great Britain at sea, and her dominion in the East, by the cession of Mysorean territory at once more extended and compacted than ever, suppressed the hostile emotions and intentions that burned within the bosom of Tippoo Sultan, though naturally daring and impetuous, until the unparalleled successes of the tremendous Bonaparte in Italy, and on the southern frontiers of the Austrian dominions, encouraged him to take some steps towards a formal confederation with the French against the English. The expanded genius of Bonaparte, seeking physical and moral instruments wherever they could be found, immediately, in the power and hatred of Tippoo, perceived an engine and springs which might be directed with effect against the commercial and maritime greatness of a nation, in enmity so formidable to the French republic; nor was he slow in setting it in motion. Having corresponded

Tippo Sultan recovers a considerable part of his former strength.

Forms a new confederacy for driving the English from India.

[a] Condottieri.

with

CHAP. LXV.

1799.

with the French general, Tippoo renewed his hopes and expectations of being able, at last, to effect the object which he and his father had so often attempted in vain. Aware of the disposition of his neighbours in the peninsula, and despairing of procuring the alliance of the Nizam and the Mahrattas, he had carried his plans of alliance to more distant powers, and projected an invasion from the northern kingdoms of Candahar and Cabul, extensive and populous countries situated between the river Indus and the southern extremities of the Caspian sea, and between the eastern confines of Persia, and great Bucharia or the country of the Usbeck Tartars; including, besides, Lahore, and the celebrated province of Cachemire, and governed by Zemaun Shah, a prince of great abilities. [b] In the mean time, Tippoo, while augmenting his whole army, laboured to increase the army of the Nizam of the Decan, though the ally of the English. A scheme was concerted between the sultan and certain French officers, for gradually raising the European force in the army of that prince above his control, and for bringing over to the side of the Mysoreans, this force, together with as many of the native troops as might be induced, according to the manner of the Asiatics, to join the party prevailing at the moment. The natural indolence of eastern sovereigns, acting in every thing by delegation, and the mode of subsisting the army by allotments of land, and not by the disbursement of money from a treasury under their own inspection, conspired to facilitate conspiracy; and above 10,000 Europeans, French, and others, were incorporated, and began to take the lead in the army of the Nizam, when this circumstance was discovered to lord Hobart, governor of Madras, by colonel Halcot, an officer commanding the military force in one of the company's establishments, in

[b] Annual Register, 1799, chap. iv.

the

the north-western parts of the presidency of Madras. In the mean time, two events happened, which contributed to disconcert the schemes of the confederacy between Tippoo and the French arms, against the British power in India. The dismission of the French faction from the Nizam's army was happily accomplished at Hydrabad, and a new subsidiary treaty ratified with that prince; and a decisive and glorious victory had been obtained by the English over a French fleet on the coast of Egypt.

His schemes are discovered, and he is admonished by the British government to relinquish his project:

THE governor-general had discovered the machinations of Tippoo, and notified to the sultan that he was acquainted with his intercourse with the French nation. He mentioned the success of the British fleet against the French in Egypt, the revival of our defensive alliance with the Nizam, and the destruction of the French influence in the Decan: he farther intimated the military preparations of the British on both coasts, and he admonished him of the danger which would accrue from proceeding in his hostile schemes. Tippoo professed to negotiate, but was really persevering in warlike preparations. The governor-general made repeated efforts to preserve peace; but finding his endeavours unavailing, determined to commence the war as effectually as possible.[c] Lord Mornington ordered two armies from the coasts of Malabar and Coromandel, commanded respectively by generals Stewart and Harris, to meet in Mysore. The Nizam's army took the field, and made the proper dispositions for forming a junction with that of Madras: this army consisted of six thousand native forces, nearly an equal number of the company's troops, subsidized by his highness, and a great body of cavalry; it then joined that of Madras under major-general Harris, about twenty-four thousand strong, which entered the Mysore

disregards the admonition.

[c] Dispatches of lord Mornington to the Company.

country

CHAP. LXV.

1799.

British armies from the two coasts take the field.

country on the 5th of May, with orders to proceed immediately to Seringapatam. In the mean time, the Malabar army equipped and put in motion with equal promptitude and judgment under general Stewart, on the 1st of February, marched from Cannanore, and ascended the Ghauts on the 25th: his army was divided into four different corps, and these moved successively into such a situation as might enable him to form the earliest possible junction with the principal army: with the same view he occupied a post at Seedaseer, near to which there is a high hill that commands a view of the Mysore, almost to the environs of Seringapatam [d]; hence our troops beheld the enemy's encampment, and perceived that they were in motion; but their movements were so well concealed (March 5th) by the woodiness of the country, and the haziness of the atmosphere, that it was impossible to ascertain their object; nor was it discovered until they had penetrated a considerable way into the jungles, and commenced an attack upon our lines, which happened between the hours of nine and ten on the 7th. The enemy pierced through the jungles with such secrecy and expedition, that they attacked our front and rear almost at the same instant. This dispatch prevented more than three of the Bombay corps being engaged; as the fourth, which was posted two miles and a half in the rear, was unable to form a junction, from the enemy having posted themselves between them and Seedaseer: the communication was completely obstructed by a column which, according to the reports of prisoners, consisted of upwards of five thousand men under the command of Baber Jung. The brigade was on every side completely surrounded, and had to contend against a vast disparity of numbers. General Stewart, informed of the danger of this corps, marched to their assistance with the flank com-

[d] Annual Register, 1799.

panies

panies of his majesty's 75th regiment, and the whole of the 77th.[e] Attacking the enemy, he after an obstinate resistance gained a victory, which enabled him to effect a junction with the main army. Tippoo now took refuge in his metropolis, which the British troops advanced to besiege. Their batteries being erected, the artillery began to play, and had, on the evening of the 3d of May, so much destroyed the walls against which they were directed, that the arrangement was made for assaulting the place next day, when the breach was reported practicable. The troops which were intended to be employed, were stationed in the trenches early on the morning of the 4th, that no extraordinary movement might lead the enemy to expect the assault, which general Harris determined should be made in the heat of the day, as the time best calculated to ensure success, for their troops would then be least prepared for making opposition. At one o'clock, the troops moved from the trenches, crossed the rocky bed of the Cavary[f], under an extreme heavy fire, passed the glacis and ditch, and ascended the breaches in the *fausse braye* and rampart of the fort; surmounted in the most gallant manner every obstacle in their way, and were completely successful. Tippoo defended himself to the last with a courage and ability worthy of his former fame: he made a stand at post after post, till at last driven to his palace, he fell among crowds of his brave defenders. His body was found under a heap of slain, and interred with all the honours due to his rank in the mausoleum of his father. Thus fell that bold, enterprising, and able barbarian, and with him the house of Hyder, which, though low in its origin, was ennobled by its exploits, splendid in its progress, and great even in its

Tippoo retires into Seringapatam.

British army storm that city.

Death of Tippoo, and reduction of Mysore.

[e] Annual Register, 1799, chap. iv.

[f] See letter of general Harris in the London Gazette extraordinary, Sept. 14, 1799.

fall;

CHAP. LXV. 1799.

fall; it is eminently distinguished from all the families or dynasties that have ever appeared in such quick succession in Hindostan, by a more extensive cultivation and application of European arts and arms, than had been known before in the dominions of any native power of Asia. On the reduction of Seringapatam, and the excision of Tippoo, lord Mornington resolved to make such arrangements as might establish the British influence and authority in the subdued country. Commissioners, appointed on the part of the company, and also in behalf of the Nizam, on the 24th of June, promulgated a scheme of partition and settlement: the capital, with its fortress, and the island in which it is situated, with some extensive districts, including Mangalore and a very considerable extent of sea-coast, were alloted to the English; a large portion was assigned to the Nizam; and a separate territory was subjected to the sway of the Mihissour, Maha Rajah Kishennai Wuddiar, a descendant of the ancient rajahs of Mysore, whose throne had been seized by Hyder Ally. The sons of Tippoo were taken into the protection of the English.

Humane and wise policy of the British government.

Proceedings in Egypt.

THE ability of Bonaparte, powerful as it was, could not effect every object through means remote from his own energy; yet where he was placed himself, he displayed an astonishing combination of talents. We left this extraordinary personage landed in Egypt, and, by the terrible discomfiture of his fleet, apparently cut off from all intercourse with his country. It was not with mamalukes and Arabs alone that the French general had to contend, but with the climate, endemial distempers, and the usual perfidy of barbarians, united with the malignity of a proud and illiberal superstition. But these circumstances served only to exercise the elasticity of genius and heroism tried by difficulty and danger. Bonaparte examined into the resources, parties, sects, opinions, sentiments, and

Situation of Bonaparte after the battle of Aboukir.

Difficulties with which he had to contend.

Exercises his extraordinary abilities.

dispositions of the people in the country wherein he was arrived. The chief military force in Egypt consisted of the mamalukes: besides these there were in Egypt a great number of Arabs, Jews, Greeks, and Copts, (who were Christians, and the descendants of the ancient Egyptians). His own force now consisted of about forty thousand soldiers, with a considerable number of transports, and some of the sailors. His first object was to manifest his force, to procure a firm footing in the country; and afterwards, to extend his power as much as possible by his moral artillery.[g] He took Alexandria by storm[h], and soon after received the submission of Rosetta and Damietta. To conciliate the good-will of the people, he published a declaration, purporting, that the French were the friends and allies of the grand seignor; that they were come to chastise the beys, and would pay every respect to the Turkish laws and religion; provide and convey regularly the due tribute to the sublime porte. Having secured his acquisitions on the coast, he marched towards Cairo, defended by Murad bey, a distinguished chief of the mamalukes, who were in great force, to the number, it has been said, of twenty thousand, but wholly composed of cavalry. The mamalukes made several brave but ineffectual charges on the French, who had only infantry. At Cairo, Murad bey assembled all his forces, and advanced into that vast plain where stand the pyramids. He was at the head of a numerous army, commanded under him by three inferior beys, all men of determined bravery, but used, like their soldiers, to fight only on horseback: they were all mounted on the finest horses, provided with the most splendid arms, and, along with these, rich purses of gold; it being the custom of the mama-

1799. dinary abilities.

Military progress.

[g] Annual Register, 1798, chap. x.; and 1799, chap. v.

[h] To the vanquisher of the Austrian host, this was an inconsiderable achievement. See sir Robert Wilson, p. 17.

 lukes

CHAP. LXV.

1799.

lukes to carry along with them what they deem most valuable. Being excellent horsemen, well acquainted with the defiles and contour of the country, and of intrepid courage and resolution, though barbarians, they were no contemptible enemies. They attacked the French with much courage and impetuosity, endeavouring to surround them, or at least to make an impression upon their flanks and rear; but were every where repulsed with such a slaughter that they were compelled to fly on all sides, leaving two thousand killed or wounded on the field: an intrenchment, which they threw up to protect their camp, was carried, together with fifty pieces of cannon that defended it, and all their baggage: many of the beys were killed or wounded. Cairo, evacuated in the night, was taken possession of by the French the next morning.[1] Thus established, Bonaparte prepared his conciliatory projects: he first considered the most generally prevalent affections of the people with whom he had now to deal. The predominant passions of the inhabitants of Egypt were religious bigotry and superstition, and a jealousy and indignation against any degree of familiarity with their women. Bonaparte, therefore, deemed it necessary to instruct and caution his army on these two important and delicate subjects: he explained to them the principal articles of the Mahomedan creed; exhorted them to shew the same respect to its ceremonials as to those of the popish faith; and inculcated universal toleration according to the example of the Roman legions. He farther enjoined abstinence from pillage, as enriching only a few, but dishonouring the whole army. Having thus cautioned his soldiers, he addressed himself to the prejudices and sufferings of the Egyptian people: they had long languished under the tyranny of the beys; Frenchmen would vindicate their natural rights,

Battle of the pyramids.

He addresses the passions and prejudices of the Egyptians.

[1] See Otridge's Annual Register for 1798, p. 150.

protect

CHAP. LXV.

1799.

protect their property, and promote their religion. All men (he said) are equal in the eyes of God; UNDERSTANDING, INGENUITY, and SCIENCE, alone make a difference between them; and what WISDOM, what talents, what virtues, distinguish the mamalukes, that they should have exclusively all that renders life sweet and pleasant? Is there a beautiful woman? she belongs to the mamalukes. Is there a handsome slave, a fine horse, a fine house? they belong to the mamalukes. All the Egyptians are entitled to the possession of all places: the wisest, most enlightened, and most virtuous, will govern, and the people will be happy. You had once great cities, large canals, much trade; who has destroyed them but the avarice, injustice, and tyranny of the mamalukes? Thus persuading what may be called the Egyptian democracy, that, through France, they would be emancipated from aristocratical tyranny, and the ancient splendor and glory of Egypt restored, he stimulated love of independence, patriotism, and pride, to cooperate with his efforts. The astonishing versatility of this extraordinary man applied itself to their religious prejudices, not only by protection, but by pretending to coincidence of opinion: he insinuated that he was actually and expressly commissioned by the prophet to resist, repel, and overthrow the tyranny of the beys, to reform certain errors and abuses, and to promote justice, mercy, and piety, the great ends of the Mahomedan religion. He also adopted the figurative and proverbial language of eastern countries. By these means he extended his influence, not only through Egypt, but through Arabia, Syria, and more northern parts of Asiatic Turkey. The task undertaken by Bonaparte, to amalgamate the prejudices of the Mahomedans with the pretensions of the French, was difficult almost beyond example, and even more arduous than the project of Mahomet:

He promises the French will protect them from the mamalukes.

He professes a respect for the Mahomedan faith.

Plan of Bonaparte to amalgamate the prejudices of the Mahomedans with the pretensions of the French.

His undertaking more difficult than the undertaking of Mahomet.

CHAP. LXV.

1799.

the plan pursued by Mahomet was great, but simple; the spirit of it was terror; the instruments, or means of execution, were great and simple also — God, war, and fate. It was a more complicated and a nicer undertaking to mingle terror with reasoning, the rights of man with the privileges or rather prerogatives of Mussulmen, and the submission of the followers, to strangers, at best only dubious friends to the prophet. To accomplish that design, Bonaparte made presents to Turks, Copts, Greeks, and Arabs. He patronized strict justice between man and man; he gave free passage and protection to the pilgrims going to and from Mecca; and encouraged all kinds of commerce. He found a number of predial slaves, whom he encouraged to industry, by giving them lands to be cultivated on their own account. He gave equal right of inheritance to all the children of the same parents. He improved the condition of women, by giving them a certain portion of the goods of their husbands at their decease, and the right of disposing of such property. He encouraged marriage between his soldiers and the natives, and endeavoured to restrain polygamy. He established schools for the instruction of the young French, Copts, and Arabs, in French, Arabic, geography, and mathematics. He was a friend to shows, festivals, games, and other diversions; in all which he wished the French and the natives to mingle together; and he submitted as a problem to the Institute by what musical instruments and airs the minds of these last might be the more readily and effectually impressed, through the power of music: by his orders, issued about the middle of September, a general assembly was to be held on or before the 12th of October, of all the notables throughout the fourteen provinces into which Egypt is divided. Deputations from each of these provinces were to form a general council, or divan, for the government

Civil and political administration.

ment of the nation, at the capital Grand Cairo. These innovations, however, were at length discovered to be contrary to the koran, and caused several insurrections; but they were speedily quelled; and the French were masters of all Lower and a great part of Upper Egypt.[k] The Turks had now entered into an alliance offensive and defensive with Russia, and were the declared enemies of France. Informed of the hostile intention of the Ottomans, Bonaparte concluded that a combined operation would take place against the French, in an expedition from Syria, and an attack by sea. Ghezzar Oglou, the bashaw of St. John d'Acre, had given a kind reception to Ibrahim Bey, with about a thousand mamalukes, after he had been driven out of Egypt into Syria: he himself had assembled a very considerable force. The bashaw of Damascus was also in motion; and multitudes of Arabs appeared ready to join the enemies of the French, if likely to prevail. The collection of an army in Egypt, or on its confines, Bonaparte apprehended, would revive the courage of the inhabitants, and overturn an authority not yet confirmed by the lapse of time, the abatement of prejudice, or the change of habit: he therefore determined to anticipate the expected attack, and made dispositions for marching into Syria; but, before he began hostilities, he professed to seek satisfaction first by conciliatory methods. He dispatched an envoy with a letter to Ghezzar, assuring him that the French nation was desirous to live at peace, and preserve friendship with the grand seignor; but he insisted that Ghezzar should dismiss Ibrahim with his mamalukes. Ghezzar, who, in his military preparations, had acted by the orders of the Porte, made no answer to this letter from Bonaparte, but sent back the officer who

1799.

His innovations are disrelished by many of the Egyptians.

Discontents.

Bonaparte proposes to march into Syria.

Object of his design.

[k] See Denon, vol. ii.

CHAP. LXV.

1799.

carried it, and put the French at Acre into irons.[l] Bonaparte therefore proceeded in his preparations, including various political precautions. The force of the army destined for this expedition amounted to above twelve thousand men.[m] The obstacles to be encountered in the passage of the desert did not admit of heavy artillery being transported by land; the ordnance that had been employed in the siege of Alexandria was put on board three frigates, which were to cruize off Jaffa, and to maintain a communication with the army. Camels and mules were provided with extraordinary expedition at Cairo, for carrying the light artillery, ammunition, and provisions, of which, the most bulky, as well the most necessary article, was water. The army was parted into four divisions, under generals Kleber, Regnier, Bon, and Lannes; the cavalry was commanded by general Mourat, the artillery by general Domnartin, and the engineers by general Chafferell. A junction was formed, February 4th, 1799, between the division of Kleber and the advanced guard of Regnier, under the command of general Grange, at Cathick; from whence they proceeded to Larissa, otherwise called El Arisch, a village pleasantly situated on the river Peneus, and the seat of a Greek archbishop, as well as of mosques for the votaries of the Mahomedan religion. Bonaparte ordered one of the towers of the castle to be cannonaded, and the breach being opened, he summoned the place to surrender: the garrison was composed of Arnauts and Maugrabins, all rude barbarians, without leaders, and uninformed in any of the principles of war that are acknowledged by civilized nations: their answer was, that they were willing to come out with their arms and baggage,

March and progress of the French army.

Bonaparte defeats the Syrians at El Arisch.

[l] See Annual Register for 1799, p. 21.

[m] Division of Kleber 2349, division of Bon 2449, division of Lannes 2924, division of Regnier 2160; cavalry 800, engineers 340, artillery 1385, guides for the infantry and cavalry 400, dromedaries 88. See Berthier's Narrative.

as

as it was their wish to go to Acre. Bonaparte professed himself anxious to spare the effusion of blood; he therefore delayed the assault[n]; and, on the 21st of February, the garrison surrendered on condition of being permitted to retire to Baydat, near the desert. On the 24th of February the army arrived at Kân Jounesse, the first village of Palestine beyond the desert: they now reached the cultivated plain of Gaza; and next day they marched against the city. The Asiatics, under Abdallah bashaw, first made a show of resistance, but soon evacuated the town. At Gaza the republicans found a considerable supply of provisions and military stores. On the 21st of March, the main army of the French began to move towards Jaffa (the ancient Joppa), a sea-port in Palestine; between which and Damietta, along the coast, the whole is desert and wild. This city is surrounded by a wall, without a ditch, and defended by strong towers provided with cannon: Trenches were opened, batteries were erected, and a practicable breach was made in the wall: notwithstanding two desperate sorties, and every exertion on the part of the garrison, about four thousand strong, the principal tower was taken, and the greater part of the brave defenders put to death; with a view, no doubt, of striking terror into other parts of Palestine, and wherever Bonaparte might direct his march. About three hundred Egyptians, who escaped from the assault, were sent back into Egypt, and restored to their families. The French found in the towers of Jaffa ten pieces of cannon, and about twenty siege pieces, either iron or brass. Having taken possession of Jaffa, he ordered that the inhabitants should be spared: in the harbour he found fifteen small trading vessels. Having formed a divan, consisting of the most distinguished Turks in

CHAP. LXV.

1799.

Capture of Jaffa.

[n] See Berthier's Narrative.

CHAP. LXV.

1799.

the place, Bonaparte took the necessary measures for restoring it to a state of defence, and also established an hospital. Jaffa was to the army a place of the highest importance, as it became the *entrepot* of every thing that was sent to them from Alexandria and Damietta. From Jaffa, Bonaparte again wrote to Ghezzar a letter, dated the 9th of March; therein he avowed his friendly intentions towards the Turks and Syrians; but announced his determination to march against Acre, unless the bashaw should become disposed for peace. To this menace, Ghezzar returned the following verbal answer: "I have not written to you because I am resolved to hold no communication with you: you may march against Acre when you please: I shall be prepared for you, and will bury myself in the ruins of the place, rather than let it fall into your hands." On receiving this answer, Bonaparte proceeded towards Acre.

Advances towards Acre.

State and importance of that fortress.

THE city of Acre, called St. Jean d'Acre, because it was the residence of the knights of Jerusalem, which they defended against the Saracens, is situated in the southern extremity of the Phœnician coast, on the confines of Palestine. After being wrested from the Christians by the Turks and Arabs, it had been recovered by the crusaders; and afterwards captured by Saladin: it was taken a second time by the romantic valour of Richard I. and given to the knights of St. John, who held it about one hundred years with great bravery: but a dispute concerning the possession of it, among the Christians themselves, gave an opportunity to Sultan Melech Seraf, with an army of one hundred and fifty thousand men, to reduce it again under the Ottoman yoke; and it has since continued dependent on the Turks.[o]

ACRE

[o] In the fifteenth century, the Druses, descendants from the Christian crusaders, wrested Acre from the Turks; and in one age, Faccardanio, an able and

1799.

Situation.

ACRE is encompassed on the north and east by a spacious and fertile plain; on the west by the Mediterranean, and on the south by a large bay, which extends from the city to mount Carmel. So frequently the object of contention, it was by its successive possessors more strongly fortified than cities have generally been under those desultory and barbarous warriors. On the 18th of March, late in the evening, the French army arrived at the mouth of the little river of Acre, which is at the distance of about 1500 fathoms from the fortress: the river runs through a very marshy ground. Bonaparte did not think it advisable to attempt so perilous a passage during the night, and the more so as the enemy had pushed forward riflemen in infantry and cavalry, to the opposite side of the river. The night was employed in constructing a bridge; on the 18th, at break of day, the whole army passed over[p]: Bonaparte that day ascended an eminence that commands a view of St. Jean d'Acre, at the distance of about a mile: he ordered his troops to attack the Syrians, drawn up in gardens that environed the town, and compelled them to retire within the fortress: the republican army was encamped upon an insulated eminence that runs near to, and parallel with the sea, and which extends as far as Cape Blanc, about a league and a half to the northward, commanding to the east a plain about a league and three quarters in length, terminated by the mountains that lie between Acre and Jordan. The French had seized magazines at Caiffa and adjacent villages, which were much wanted for the sustenance of the army.

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and eminent chief, becoming connected with the Tuscan princes of Medici, introduced various improvements in the arts and literature; but, after his death, Acre again fell into the hands of the Turks, and was overwhelmed like their other dominions by Turkish barbarism.

[p] See Berthier's Narrative.

Having

CHAP. LXV.

1799.

The French army invests the city.

Having employed the 19th in reconnoitring the fortress, Bonaparte resolved to attack the front of the salient angle, at the eastward of the town: no intelligence had yet arrived of the siege artillery that was sent by sea. On the 20th, the trenches were opened at about 150 fathoms from the fortress; and advantage was taken of the garden, and ditches of the old town, and of an aqueduct that unites with the glacis of the town: posts were stationed to blockade the place, so as to keep the Syrians within their walls, and to repulse them with advantage and effect, in case they should attempt a sortie. In defending the fortress, Ghezzar was to be supported by an army which was to march from Damascus; and the combined operation of these forces from Syria was to be favoured by a diversion, towards the mouth of the Nile, by Mourad Bey, who, though compelled to retreat before the French, was yet in considerable strength, and would be joined by bodies of Arabs.

Sir Sidney Smith with a British squadron arrives at Acre.

To direct and assist the execution of this plan, sir Sidney Smith hastened to Acre. This distinguished officer had left Portsmouth the preceding autumn, and was now commander of the British naval force in the Archipelago, consisting of the Tigre of 80 guns, the Theseus of 74 guns, and the Alliance of 20 guns. Informed of the first movements of Bonaparte, he endeavoured to detain him by bombarding Alexandria, but found that without troops he could do the enemy no effectual injury in that city. Finding that Bonaparte had marched to Syria, he hastened to Acre, to concert with the Turkish governor the plan of defence: he arrived two days before the French army. On the 16th, an achievement of the commodore greatly facilitated the progress of defensive preparations; he chased and captured, off the cape of Carmel, the whole French flotilla, under the command of Eydoun, chief of division, laden with

Captures a French flotilla.

heavy

heavy cannon, ammunition, platforms, and other articles necessary for Bonaparte's army to undertake the siege. This artillery, consisting of forty-four pieces, was immediately mounted on the ramparts of Acre, against the line and batteries of the enemy, as well as on the gun-vessels.

He perceives the importance of here repressing the progress of the French.

Sir Sidney Smith, a man of genius as well as military and naval skill, clearly and fully comprehended the exact situation in which he was placed, and the characters on which he was to act. The adherence of the Asiatics, either to one side or the other, would, he saw, depend on events: if Bonaparte, after such signal successes in Egypt, were to continue in his course of advancing conquest, the Asiatics, deeming him invincible, would desist from farther opposition, and many of them would even join the French invaders, in the hopes of plunder. If, on the other hand, he were repelled, the Asiatics would unite with their enraged Mahomedan brethren in harassing and annoying the subduer of Mussulmen. The physical force of the Syrians, and their auxiliaries from Egypt and Arabia, was very considerable; but their intellectual and moral energies were by no means equal to the French. Both France and Britain knew well, from the experience of India, that Mahomedan valour, directed, methodized, and fortified by Christian genius and skill, formed very efficacious troops. Smith was fully convinced that the soldiers of western Asia were naturally as brave as those of eastern; and considered how their courage and prowess could be most speedily animated and directed to effectual action. The time did not admit of that regular and systematic discipline which assimilates seapoys to British soldiers; it was necessary not only to stimulate exertion, but to prompt such speedy effort as would immediately influence Asiatic opinion: the first and grand object of Smith's comprehensive mind, was to infuse

His masterly view of the situation of affairs.

His first purpose to inspirit the Turks.

CHAP. LXV. 1799.

fuse into the strength and courage of the Turkish soldiers the energies of a British soul; by a kind of mental alchemy to transmute gross metal into the purest and most valuable. This was the great principle of sir Sidney Smith's policy; he sought to give unity of wish and pursuit to very great diversity of sentiment, prejudice, and views; to make the mamalukes of Egypt, the Turks of Syria, the bedouins of Arabia, and the Christians of Palestine, unite as instruments in the hands of Englishmen, for opposing the French. In moral artillery, so successfully as we have seen prepared and employed by the French commander, the British officer also shewed himself supremely conversant. He found that different as the various tribes were from one another, and immensely different as they all were from Englishmen, there were some principles which they had in common. They all regarded religion, their property, and their independence. Sir Sidney Smith very ably and eloquently called on believers to unite against infidels, on all who valued their own effects, their own country, families, and the government which was most consonant with their habits and sentiments, to combine against systematic plunderers, invaders, and revolutionizers. These representations being strongly urged in all the cities and provinces of the neighbourhood, made a very powerful impression, and great bodies of natives were excited to approach to Acre. But Bonaparte so posted his troops as to render the arrival of succours by land very difficult. The English commander, therefore, while by his political negociations stirring up armies of Asiatics against the French, was obliged to form his military plans from the garrison that was already at Acre: the co-operation of the Asiatics without would depend upon the effects of the efforts within.

He diffuses moral energy into their physical strength.

The French effect

BONAPARTE pressed the siege with his usual vigour

gour and skill. The figure of Acre is rectangular, having the sea on the west and south sides. Though Bonaparte had approached from the south by mount Carmel, which is washed by the bay, he had carried on the siege on the north and east sides, both to intercept the Syrian army from the country, and to be as much as possible out of the reach of the British ships. On the 3d of April, having effected a breach in the wall on the north-east part of the town, he attempted to take it by assault, but was vigorously repulsed with very great loss. The British commander made dispositions for a sortie, to be executed under the orders of colonel Douglas, and the direction of colonel Philipeaux. On the 7th of April it was proposed that the British marines and seamen should force their way into a mine which the French were forming towards a tower that protected the north-east angle of the wall; while the Turks should attack the enemy's trenches on the right and left. The British seamen succeeded in destroying all that part of the enemy's preparations; and great numbers of the French were slain. But a much more important advantage was attained than even the destruction of the work; the example of the British forces inspirited the Turks to the most determined and resolute efforts: they were filled with admiration of their valiant defenders, and wished to vie with them in prowess and skill. Bonaparte, meanwhile, was successfully engaged in repelling the approaches of the Syrian army, and his generals Kleber and Murat gained repeated victories in Syria; while he himself continued before Acre. During the month of April, various sorties were made, in which the garrison was generally successful. In the beginning of May, a fleet of transports appeared in the road of Acre, bringing a strong reinforcement of troops, commanded by Hassan Bey. Bonaparte determined on a vigorous assault, before

breaches in the wall.

Assaults on the town.

Inspirited and headed by the English, the Turks repel the attack.

CHAP. LXV.

1799. Grand assault by the French.

before those troops should be disembarked. The constant fire of the besiegers was suddenly increased tenfold, and they had raised epaulements which shielded them from the fire of the British ships. Several batteries, managed by sailors, were planted on shore, which, added to the Turkish musketry, did great execution. Still, however, the enemy gained ground, and made a lodgment in the second story of the north-east tower. The upper part being entirely battered down, and the ruins in the ditch forming the ascent by which they mounted, day-light shewed the French standard on the outer angle of the town. The fire of the besieged was much slackened in comparison to that of the besiegers, and the British flanking fire was become of less effect, the enemy having covered themselves in this lodgment and the approach to it by two traverses across the ditch. Hassan Bey's troops were in the boats, though as yet but half way to shore. This was a most critical point of the contest, and an effort was necessary to preserve the place for a short time till their arrival. Here the genius of sir Sidney Smith, in the midst of danger and alarm, retaining the completest self-possession and a thorough command of all his faculties, devised one of those happy movements which have frequently decided the fate of battles, and even of nations: he landed his crew at the mole, and, arming them with pikes, led them to the breach, where the Turks, having made a very brave resistance, were fast becoming feeble and hopeless, and many of them, in despair, were leaving the conflict; when the sight of such a reinforcement re-animated their valour, and inspirited the most astonishing efforts. The grateful acclamations of the Asiatics, men, women, and children, went feelingly home to the hearts of our generous tars[q], and invigorated their gladdened coad-

Smith employs his sailors as soldiers.

[q] See letters of sir Sidney, London Gazette, September 10th, 1799.

jutors.

jutors. With the heroic sailors, the fugitive Asiatics returned to the breach, which was defended by a few brave Turks, whose most destructive missile weapons were heavy stones; these, striking the assailants on the head, overthrew the foremost down the slope, and impeded the progress of the rest. A succession, however, ascended to the assault, the heaps of ruins between the two parties serving as a breast-work for both. The muzzles of their muskets touched one another, and the spear-heads of the standards were locked together. Ghezzar, hearing that the English were on the breach, quitted his station, where, according to the ancient Turkish custom, he was sitting to reward such as should bring him the heads of the enemy, and distributing musket cartridges with his own hand. The energetic old man, coming behind, forcibly pulled them down, saying, if any harm happened to his English friends, all was [r] lost. This amicable contest, as to who should defend the breach, occasioned a rush of Turks to the spot, and thus time was gained for the arrival of the first body of Hassan's troops. It was necessary to combat the bashaw's repugnance to the admission of any troops but his Albanians into the garden of his seraglio, become a very important post, as occupying the terre-plein of the rampart. There were not above two hundred of the original thousand Albanians left alive. The eloquence of sir Sidney over-ruled the bashaw's objections: a regiment, called the Chifflic, was introduced, consisting of a thousand men, armed with bayonets, and disciplined after the European method, under sultan Selim's own eye; and placed, by his orders, under sir Sidney's immediate command. The garrison, animated by the appearance of such a reinforcement, was now all on foot, and there being consequently enough to defend the breach, sir

CHAP. LXV.

1799.

Efficacious efforts and example of this heroic band.

[r] See letters of sir Sidney, London Gazette, September 10th, 1799.

Sidney

CHAP. LXV. 1799.

Sidney proposed to the bashaw to get rid of the objects of his jealousy, by opening his gates to let them make a sally, and then to take the assailants in flank. Ghezzar readily complied: the gates were opened, the Turks rushed out; but were repulsed with loss. The French now renewed the attack, and in a massive column advanced to the breach. Ghezzar proposed not to defend the opening this time; but to suffer a certain number of them to enter, and close with them before they were joined by the rest. The French column thus mounted the breach unmolested, and descended from the rampart into the bashaw's garden, where, in a very few minutes, the bravest and most advanced among them lay headless corpses; the sabre, with the addition of a dagger in the other hand, proving more than a match for the [s] bayonet.

The French are entirely vanquished.

Retaining the spirit which the energetic heroism of the British seamen had inspired, the Turks charged the republicans with so impetuous and persevering vigour, as finally to accomplish sir Sidney's design, by a complete repulse of the enemy. During this conflict, multitudes of spectators covered the surrounding hills, ready, as usual with those unprincipled hordes, to join the conqueror; and, through the efforts of Smith, taught that the French invader was not irresistible, were the more disposed to join the opposite party. Continuing his purpose of availing himself of the turns of opinion with great skill and genius, the British commander sent circular letters to the native tribes, recalling them to a sense of their duty and interest, and engaging them to cut off supplies from the French camp. The repulse of the 8th of May, so glorious in effort, proved more speedily decisive in event than even its illustrious author himself ex-

[s] See sir Sidney Smith's letter of May 9th, in the Gazette of Sept. 10th, 1799.

pected.

pected.[t] From this time, Bonaparte appears to have been convinced of the impolicy of farther perseverance against Acre, and the impracticability of farther advances into the Turkish empire. As he himself had warred partly by moral artillery, he perceived he had met with an antagonist who applied himself to the same species of engine: he saw, that without the co-operation of Asiatic opinion and assistance, it would be impossible for him, with his reduced army, to proceed; and he saw that British heroism and genius, followed by success, had given an effectual turn to the natives. Nor was enmity to him, he well knew, confined to Turkish Asia, disaffection had been studiously promoted by the beys in Egypt, which the reports of his disappointment would encourage to manifest itself. His own presence only could effectually repress attempts so extremely probable. Persistance in his present undertaking was wasteful and ruinous. Farther advance, from the impulse communicated by sir Sidney Smith, was totally impracticable. To retreat alone remained; and on this movement Bonaparte resolved. May 20th, he began his departure towards Egypt. His battering train of artillery, consisting of twenty-three pieces, fell into the hands of the English; the lighter artillery, which had been brought through the desert, was sent back by sea; but captured by sir Sidney Smith. The British officers whom sir Sidney mentioned as, after Philipeaux and Douglas, the most eminently distinguished, were, major Oldfield, killed in one of the first sorties; captain Wilmot, and captain Miller, of the navy, of whom the former lost his life; lieutenants Wright, Brodie, and Canes; and Summers the midshipman; and indeed all our force, naval and marine, are included

Retreat from Acre.

Bonaparte returns to Egypt.

[t] In the close of his letter of May 9th, sir Sidney was still doubtful of the immediate issue of the contest; though he was convinced it had so much weakened the republican army, that it would ultimately prevent the progress of their invasion. See last paragraph of his letter.

CHAP. LXV. 1799.

in the high praises of their brave and meritorious commander. Thus terminated the siege of Acre, after having lasted sixty-four days. The garrison, consisting originally of undisciplined troops, and possessing scarcely any artillery, must have soon fallen before the republican host, if the brave bands of England, with a Douglas and a Smith, had not intervened. But it was not merely the physical force, not exceeding fifteen hundred men, that could combat the Gallic multitudes of victorious veterans, so commanded; it was the energy which their example infused into the Asiatic defenders, that foiled the enemy. By this successful defence of Acre, it is morally certain that the able and heroic Smith saved the rich provinces and cities of Asiatic, and even European Turkey, from becoming a prey to the French republic; swelling the possessions of our enemy, already so enormous, with the addition of territory and its spoils, that would have afforded the means of farther aggrandisement and spoliation, dangerous to every other country. As sir Sidney Smith first showed that even BONAPARTE was not invincible by ENGLISHMEN, he first effectually repressed Gallic schemes of boundless ambition, which invaded, revolutionised, and despoiled unoffending nations. Such must impartial history transmit to posterity, sir Sidney Smith, the defender of Acre, and the repeller of Bonaparte.

The Turks send an army to Aboukir, but are defeated.

BONAPARTE, in the end of June, after being much harrassed by the Asiatics in his retreat, arrived at Cairo. The successes of the Turks, in defensive operations, encouraged them to attempt a plan of offence for the recovery of Egypt; and a considerable Turkish army landed at Aboukir. Bonaparte, being at Cairo informed of the arrival of this armament, after making proper dispositions for the defence and peace of Upper Egypt and Cairo, and for preserving a communication with both, marched

to

CHAP. LXV.

1799.

to Alexandria; thence he proceeded to Aboukir, where the Turks were posted. On the 25th of July a battle was fought, in which, as the French veterans had only to contend with undisciplined Ottomans, they gained a signal victory. The Turks immediately left Egypt, and Bonaparte returned to civil arrangements. Having repelled this invasion, and also crushed several attempts of the mamalukes, he, during the rest of his stay, devoted his attention to the internal state of the country, natural, civil, and political; and to devising improvements. He was ardently desirous to promote the interests of literature and science, and to bring every kind of intellectual ability into efficient action. With this view the learned men, whom he took with him to Egypt, were employed in determining latitudes; examining the state, and taking the surveys of canals and lakes; in repairing canals [u]; in examining and describing plants and animals, in mineralogical researches; and, what is nearly connected with these, chymical experiments; in making observations, geological, nosological, and meteorological; in drawing plans of towns, edifices, and various monuments of antiquity; in improving agriculture; in erecting a chymical laboratory, founderies, windmills, and other useful works. Bonaparte formed a library, and an institution for promoting art, science, and philosophy. He also paid particular attention to navigation and commerce. He took a very detailed survey of the towns and adjacent coasts, and ordered the construction of certain works for the defence of this important post. For the encouragement of commerce he lowered the duties paid to the bashaws and mamalukes; and for carriage of goods, established regular caravans from Suez to Cairo and Belbeis. He discovered the remains of the canal of Suez, and taking a geometrical survey of its course, ascertained the ex-

Measures of Bonaparte for the improvement of Egypt.

[u] See Denon, passim.

CHAP. LXV.

1799.

istence of one of the greatest and most useful works in the world. Indeed few generals, recorded in ancient or modern times, surpassed Bonaparte, in uniting with the progress of arms the researches of investigation, the deductions of science with their practical applications to the purposes of life. Such were the pursuits of this conqueror, when the affairs of France recalled him from the banks of the Nile to the banks of the Seine.

CHAP. LXVI.

Internal affairs of France — the directory becomes unpopular — the revival of the system of terror threatened — Bonaparte unexpectedly arrives from Egypt — character and views of the abbé Sieyes — popularity of Bonaparte — he is adored by the army — plan of a new constitution — Bonaparte is invested with the command of the army — the legislative bodies translated to St. Cloud — Bonaparte's address to the army — he enters the council of elders — and is favourably received — opposed in the council of five hundred — but is seconded by grenadiers with bayonets — the partisans of Bonaparte pray for his assistance, to enable them to deliberate peaceably — the grenadier guards remove the refractory members — dissolution of the legislature — new constitution — Bonaparte is chosen chief consul — offers peace to his Britannic majesty. — Britain. — gloomy prospect — people again wish for peace — meeting of parliament — proposals of the consul to our king — answer rejecting his proposals — submitted to parliament — arguments of ministers, insincerity and instability of Bonaparte — of opposition, that Bonaparte is disposed and competent to make peace — the rejection of the overtures is approved by great majorities — German subsidies — motion for an inquiry into the expedition to Holland — rejected by a great majority — progress of the intended union with Ireland — proposed articles — arguments for and against — the plan of union, and time of commencement are finally fixed by both parliaments — dearness of provisions — corn and bread bill — bill of lord Auckland concerning the marriage of divorced persons — the duke of Clarence's view of the subject — arguments for and against — is rejected — warmly engages the public attention — attempt at the theatre to assassinate our sovereign — is found to arise from lunacy — anxious alarm of the public — amendment of the insanity bill — parliament rises.

THE war in Italy, under Bonaparte, had not only fed and supported itself, but afforded a surplusage of finance to the treasury of Paris. Scarcely had

CHAP. LXVI.

1799.

CHAP. LXVI.

had that renowned chief embarked on board the French squadron at Toulon, when a remissness was visible in the military affairs of France. Neither was the genius of the directory, Barras alone excepted, suited to war; nor did the system on which they aimed at the establishment of their own power and fortune, admit of that pure, faithful, and prompt distribution of the resources of the nation, which was necessary to a vigorous exertion in so many scenes on such an extended theatre. A majority of them, Reubel, Lepaux, and Merlin, bred lawyers, were jealous of military renown and influence; and wished not for any greater number of troops than might be necessary barely to secure the frontier, and, above all, their own despotism in the internal affairs of the republic. The possession of authority, and the new avenues for governing by corruption, diminished in their eyes the necessity of supporting themselves by supporting the army. The French were divided into two great parties, the lovers of order, and the jacobins. The former were the most numerous, as well as respectable; the latter the most united, daring, and active. The directory endeavoured to acquire popularity, by forbearing the imposition of fresh taxes; supplies of men, and all necessaries were wanting to the armies; nor were the sums which were raised honestly applied to public services; and the directory became odious and despicable. The discomfiture and defeats that every where attended the French armies, in the earlier part of 1799, united with a general contempt and detestation of the executive government, awakened the courage with the hopes of the jacobins, and threatened the moderate and peaceable part of the nation with a revival of the system of terror. The directors through fear resigned, and a new directory was substituted in their place; the nation was in the greatest confusion; and thought with regret on the absence of the renowned general

1799. Internal affairs of France.

The directory becomes unpopular.

The revival of the system of terror threatened.

general who had given them victory and glory. Bonaparte was warned how much his political weight was wanted, and conceived what important effects his presence might produce at Paris; he therefore resolved to leave Egypt. At his departure, he wrote a letter to the army, expressing the necessity of his immediate return to France, and declaring his regret to part from the brave men to whom he was so tenderly attached. Kleber he appointed commander in chief, during his absence, and Dessaix general of Upper Egypt. He set sail from Aboukir with two frigates and two sloops. On the 24th of August, without fearing interception, he encountered the Mediterranean; and in the end of September arrived at Corsica. Sailing from thence in the beginning of October, when he approached the coast of France, he was nearly overtaken by some English cruizers, but dextrously escaped the danger, by striking into a small sea-port in Provence. As he passed from the south to Paris, he was received with triumphal honours. The courier who had been dispatched before him to announce his arrival to the directory, and to prepare relays of horses for his journey, called out for them every where in his name; and from every town and village the people rushed out to meet him, and accompanied him beyond their respective communities: so immense was the crowd, even in the roads, that the carriages found it difficult to go forward. At Lyons, but most of all at Paris, he was the object of enthusiastic admiration. These sentiments facilitated, and indeed probably produced, the revolution of 1799.

CHAP. LXVI. 1799.

Bonaparte unexpectedly arrives from Egypt.

One of the new directors was the abbé Sieyes, a man of great metaphysical ability, combined with political address, who, though unamiable in his manners, had acquired very great sway with the moderate party of republicans. The abbé Sieyes had early foreseen, or apprehended, the discordant

Character and views of the abbé Sieyes.

CHAP. LXVI. 1799.

and fluctuating nature of the various forms of government that had been adopted since the overthrow of the monarchy. He had attempted, in vain, the introduction of a constitution, which, though still retaining the name, and in some degree the form of a republic, should be consolidated and swayed by one chief magistrate, and a constitutional jury, or conservative senate; and, in the various changes that took place from time to time, he was a friend to an increase of power in the hands of the executive government. The abbé Sieyes had gained an ascendancy in the public councils, but had to contend with the democratical party; and to overthrow the principles and plans of this faction by an opposite system, in which his own project of a single chief and a constitutional jury should be adopted, was the leading principle in his conduct, and the great object of his incessant contrivance. In the returning disposition to the government of a single person, the sentiments of Sieyes, supported by his distinguished abilities, produced him very great influence among the moderate and much more numerous party; and at the return of Bonaparte, he was deemed the most profound political character in the civil department of the French republic; and indeed none could surpass him in the power of compassing his ends by intellectual dexterity and skill. His great object was to command the minds of men, and rather by convincing their understandings, or at least impressing on them his doctrines and views, than by interesting their passions. He spoke more to the opinions, than the feelings of men; was more desirous of obtaining proselytes than partisans. To employ an analogy which has been before used in the history, the artillery of Sieyes was rather logical than moral; the predominancy of his intellectual deductions, he seems to have sought more than external splendor and power. It was at first doubted whether the

the metaphysical depth of Sieyes, or the sublime conception, invention, and design, the penetrating genius, firm and undaunted spirit, conciliating policy, and military renown of Bonaparte, would acquire the ascendancy: but a subtile and profound metaphysician, applying exclusively to reason, if he come into competition with one whose intellectual meditation is combined with a versatile and soaring imagination, with energy of affection and of active powers, applying not only to the reason but to the fancy and passions, will soon find himself totally surpassed in the power of commanding men. The profound philosophers might have greatly influenced transcendant genius engaged in energetic actions, but the acting statesmen or heroes would always, if really men of superior ability, preside and govern. In no human society could a Locke, if he had turned statesman, have out-stripped a secretary Pitt or a Marlborough; a Hume or a Montesquieu, a Frederic; an Aristotle, an Alexander. Among the susceptible, ardent, and impetuous French, so fond of glory, and not only of great, but of striking and brilliant actions and characters, there could be little doubt to whom the preference would be given, if a contest had actually taken place between Sieyes and Bonaparte; but, in fact, there is no evidence that such a competition ever was in agitation. Indeed, their respective characters and circumstances rendered concert expedient and practicable. Bonaparte uniformly professed himself the votary of that moderate and regulated government, which suited the metaphysical delineation of Sieyes; and Bonaparte, from his talents, his popularity, and estimation among Frenchmen, was the most efficient person that could be found for carrying such a system of legislation into execution, and for undertaking the supreme active functions of such a government. Bonaparte soon manifested that he was inimical to

Popularity of Bonaparte.

jacobinical

CHAP. LXVI.

1799.

He is adored by the army.

Plan of a new constitution.

jacobinical licentiousness, and joined the moderate party. He also showed himself very conscious that the fate of France was in his power. The army was at his devotion, through all its ranks and gradations; among the people, he was the object of idolizing admiration. Sieyes and Bonaparte admitted into their councils Rœderer; these associates, assured that the multitude, both civil and military, would follow Bonaparte, concerted a new plan of government: the ostensible and avowed object of this junto was to deliver the republic from the evils of jacobinism, which had produced such enormous mischiefs and dreadful miseries. The associates communicated their scheme to several members of the legislative assemblies, whom they reckoned confidants and friends. The prevalence of jacobinism and anarchy, they, with reason, imputed to too great preponderance of democracy in the legislature and government, notwithstanding the various corrective's they had undergone since the dissolution of the national convention. The control of the council of elders was too feeble for restraining the violence and licentiousness of a popular assembly; the executive authority distributed among five, was totally inefficient and inadequate to its purposes. The principles of the projected change were, an increase of control upon the popular part of the legislature, and an increase of executive power; that for this purpose, there should be one supreme executive magistrate. The plan for effecting this alteration, was a representative assembly: the members of the senate were to have a much more durable power than the former council of elders: to lessen farther the popular character of the legislative bodies, the chief part of their business was to be transacted by committees of twenty-five each, who were to arrange objects of police, legislation, and finance, in conjunction with the executive power: thus, the real deliberative body, instead of being excessively

excessively democratical, was now proposed to be oligarchical. The executive power was to be vested in three consuls, one of whom was to be the supreme magistrate. This executory was to possess the administrative functions in every department, and to appoint all the officers, civil and military, for internal tranquillity, defence against foreign enemies, every kind of intercourse with foreign powers; in short, for every purpose of executorial conduct. More closely to unite the deliberative oligarchy with the executorial monarchy, influence was to be added to power; the members of the legislative bodies were not only allowed but invited to accept and exercise the manifold offices of honour, trust, and emolument, dependent on the chief consul. The abettors of this project enlarged the circle of their communications, and gained over a considerable number of the council of elders, who either really deemed such a change necessary for the suppression of jacobinical anarchy, or individually hoped for a much larger share of emolument and power, now that the management of the nation was to be contracted into so narrow a circle. Though many were trusted, yet with such discrimination and caution was the confidence imparted, that the secret was kept inviolate, until the moment of intended manifestation. Having concerted their plan, the associates with firmness, energy, and consummate ability, carried it into execution. By an article of the constitution of 1795, it was established, that the council of elders might change, whenever they should think proper, the residence of the legislative bodies; that, in this case, they should appoint a new place and time for the meeting of the two councils; and that, whatever the elders should decree with regard to this point, should be held irrevocable. Paris, where the jacobins were still so numerous, was not the scene for effecting the change with that ease and tranquillity which

CHAP. LXVI. 1799.

the

CHAP. LXVI. 1799.

the projectors deemed most effectual to the promotion of their scheme. A majority of the council of elders were now gained over to their views. A committee of inspectors had been appointed to investigate the conspiracies alleged to be carried on by jacobins. This commission being in the interests of the associates, represented jacobin conspiracies as about to burst forth upon Paris. Early in the morning of the 9th of November, they sent letters of convocation to all the members of the council of elders, except noted jacobins. The members thus convoked, not in the real secret, were told that a terrible conspiracy of jacobins was preparing, and that the most effectual measures ought to be adopted for averting the danger. Carnot expatiated on the impending mischiefs, and the necessity of speedy and effective measures for deliverance. Regnier adopted the same tenor of reasoning, as to the alarming plots of jacobins, but was more particular and specific in recommending the means of delivery. They ought to transport the legislative body to a place near Paris, where they might deliberate safely on the measures necessary for the salvation of the country. Bonaparte was ready to undertake the execution of any decree with which he might be charged: he, therefore, proposed that the councils should be transferred to St. Cloud; and the motion was carried by a great majority. It was farther moved and resolved, that this translation should take place on the following day; that Bonaparte should be charged with the execution of the decree, and to take the necessary measures for the security of the national representation: that, for this end, he should be invested with the general command of every kind of armed force at Paris; that he should be called into the council to take the requisite oaths; and finally, that a message, containing the resolution of the council,

Bonaparte is invested with the command of the army.

council, should be sent to the directory, and to the council of five hundred. CHAP. LXVI.

An address was voted to the French people, stating, the right possessed by the council of elders, to remove the legislative body to St. Cloud, and also the motives which had induced them to use the privilege in the present circumstances.[a] The general avowed object of the council, was to repress the spirit of insubordination, faction, and commotion. The Parisians moved by this address, desirous of peace, and confident in Bonaparte, waited calmly for the developement of the catastrophe. Bonaparte, by the decree of the council invested with irresistible military force, appeared in the hall of the assembly, accompanied by several generals; he informed the council that he would execute the decree in his own name, and that of his companions in arms: "assisted (he said) by my brave companions, I will put a stop to the prevailing disturbances: *we* want a republic *founded on civil liberty*, or a national representation; we shall have it—I swear we shall." The message of the elders being read at the bar of the council of five hundred, the deputies not entrusted with the secret were struck with astonishment, observed silence, and suspended all deliberation. Various proclamations were published on the occasion, by the supporters of Bonaparte's schemes: one of these was by himself addressed to the army, he therein informed the soldiers of the command which had been conferred on him; inviting them to second him with their accustomed courage and firmness, promising them liberty, victory, and peace, and to restore the republic to the rank which two years ago it had held in Europe, and which incapacity and treason had brought to the verge of destruction: he announced to the national guard at Paris,

1799. Translation of the legislative body to St. Cloud.

Bonaparte's address to the army.

[a] See Annual Register for 1800, p. 14.

that

CHAP. LXVI. 1799.

that a new order of things was on the point of being settled; that the council of elders was going to save the state, and that *whoever should oppose their designs, should perish by the bayonets of the soldiers.* Still the supporters of the intended revolution endeavoured to represent their project as the result of rectitude and patriotism; and for this purpose they employed various engines of conciliation, especially the press. [b]

BONAPARTE sent a considerable force to the council-house of the elders; he himself, with a great number of staff-officers repaired to the Thuilleries, the approaches to which were shut up from the public; a strong detachment of cavalry was stationed near the hall of the council of five hundred: these different bodies were reinforced in the morning by additional troops, and particularly by cavalry and artillery: the directory were invited to resign, but did not all immediately comply; the refractory were put under a guard; the decree was sealed for translating the legislative bodies; the directorial guard joined with Bonaparte: the general with an immense military force repaired to

[b] On the celebrated 9th of November, a pamphlet was distributed at the door of the two councils, intitled "A Dialogue between a Member of the Council of Elders, and a Member of the Council of Five Hundred." This production was in the usual style of dialogues, written by a party author, between a champion of his own side, and of the opposite; in which the former has the argument all his own way; or if his shadowy antagonist urges any objections, they are feeble, and easily overcome. The advocate of the elders endeavours to remove the scruples and to allay the fears of the other, by observing, that the translation of the councils was a constitutional measure; that in the present circumstances, it was necessary to the freedom of deliberation and debate; that as to insuring the execution of this measure by an armed force, this also must be considered as a thing constitutional, or clearly within the powers of the council of elders, who, if they could change the residence of the legislature, must also be supposed to possess the means of changing it in peace and safety. Protection would be afforded to liberty and property, the constitution would be restored, the reign of terror and jacobinism would be entirely overthrown. This *reasoning* convinces the advocate of the five hundred, but he expresses his apprehensions from the interference of Bonaparte. These the other advocate removes by expatiating on Bonaparte's character, and quoting Bonaparte's professions and conduct. *His very acceptance of the commission* which he was called upon to execute, was an unequivocal proof of his moderation and patriotism.

St.

St. Cloud, where the assemblies were to meet, under the superintending protection of the general and army. The directors now all resigned their offices; motions were made for inquiring into the reasons of the translation, but these were immediately overruled. Bonaparte now entered the council of elders, and in a speech, informed them, that he was come with his brave companions in arms devoted to their service, and to the good of their country; he was *not* a Cromwell or a Cæsar, coming with bands of supporters to establish a military government; but a *friend to freedom* and his country, joined with his valiant fellow patriots, who had so often been crowned with signal victory, to save them from intestine destruction: conspiracies were going forward; cherished by these rebellion was again rearing its head; the nation was in the most imminent danger; the most vigorous and decisive measures were necessary. The present constitution (he said) has been a pretext for all manner of tyranny; for the preservation of the republic it must be completely changed: the constitution, too often violated, is utterly inadequate to the salvation of the people: it is indispensably necessary to have recourse to means fitted to carry into execution the sacred principles of the sovereignty of the people, civil liberty, and freedom of speech as of thought, and in a word the realization of ideas hitherto only chimerical. Some members of the council manifested a spirit of opposition to the general; but in the council of five hundred, he had to encounter much more serious obstacles than that which he had experienced in the elders; and there was a very general cry of "support the constitution, no dictators, we are not afraid of bayonets." This last declaration was soon put to the test; while the assembly was engaged in debate, the door opened, Bonaparte entered, accompanied by a party of grenadiers, while vast multitudes of soldiers beset the entrance.

He enters the council of elders,

and is favourably received.

He is opposed in the council of five hundred;

CHAP. LXVI.

1799.

entrance. The assembly was in an uproar; many called out, "dare armed men enter the legislative assembly of a free people! down with the dictator!" Many darting from their seats, seized the general by the collar, and pushed him towards the door; one person aimed a dagger at his breast, which was parried by a grenadier. General Le Febre now rushed in with a much larger body of soldiers than had at first rescued Bonaparte. The president of the assembly was Lucien Bonaparte, the general's brother: the meeting being in a most violent ferment, the chairman was in imminent danger. Bonaparte himself meanwhile harangued his soldiers, who declared they would stand by him to the last extremity. A party entering the assembly-hall, rescued Lucien from the enraged deputies, whom the general described as factious assassins, opposing patriotic efforts for the salvation of the republic. The president exhorted the general to deliver the representatives of the people from conspirators of their own number, that they might deliberate peaceably concerning the destiny of the republic. To secure the peaceful exercise of their legislative functions to patriotic members, application was made to the grenadier guards. The soldiers were ordered to re-enter the hall; and, without firing upon the refractory members, simply to charge bayonet: they entered accordingly with drums beating, and marched up the hall. Before he gave the signal for charge, the commanding officer of this brigade took the speaker's chair, and first called out, citizens representatives, this place is no longer safe; I invite you to withdraw. Plain as this hint was, it did not prove sufficient; and his next address was still plainer. Representatives withdraw, it is the general's orders. Many of the members continuing reluctant, the officer's next address was still shorter, and directed his men to present bayonets; the drums beat to the

but is seconded by grenadiers with bayonets.

The partisans of Bonaparte pray for his assistance to enable them to deliberate peaceably.

The grenadiers remove the refractory members.

the charge, the house was immediately cleared, or to use a word more historically appropriate, was *purged*.[c] The council of elders now declared that the factious assassins of the other house did not deserve the name of representatives; and therefore that they, the council of elders, were the whole of the national representation. They however invited those in the other council, who had not opposed their measures, to resume their meeting. Having accordingly met, they joined in reprobating the factious malignity of their late jacobinical brethren; in bestowing the highest praises on the intentions, counsels, and efforts of Bonaparte; and in testifying the warmest gratitude to the officers and soldiers, who, by repressing outrageous violence, had proved themselves such efficacious friends of moderation and freedom. They farther declared their resolution to co-operate in the measures of the general and council of elders for saving the country. In this harmonious disposition of the legislative bodies, was presented the project, of which the outlines are already exhibited; and after some detail of discussions and illustrations, very unanimously adopted. Those members of the lower council, who had so violently opposed the projectors of the new revolution, were entirely excluded from a seat. The supreme objects of the new constitution were to be the re-establishment of tranquillity, virtue, prosperity, and happiness at home; and to restore peace with foreign nations. The consuls chosen for executive administration, were Ducos and Sieyes, two of the late directors; the chief consul, and supreme executive magistrate, now elected, was Bonaparte. The first measures of this extraordinary man, now at the head of the French nation, were directed to conciliation, both domestic and foreign. He had

Dissolution of the legislature.

New constitution.

Bonaparte is chosen chief consul.

[c] See colonel Pride's process in the house of commons, under the direction of Oliver Cromwell.

CHAP. LXVI. 1798.

uniformly, when less exalted in station, professed himself determined to bestow peace upon Europe: he regarded the British nation with the warmest admiration of its character, enhanced by the astonishing exertions by which she combated the gigantic efforts of the French republic. He saw it was the interest of the two chief nations of the world not to exhaust themselves in unavailing war. The first act of foreign policy in his consular supremacy was to bring the two chief nations of the world to peace.

Offers peace to his Britannic majesty.

Britain.

In Britain, the energy of 1798 had continued through a considerable part of 1799; the battle of the Nile re-animating Europe, had encouraged the imperial powers to hostilities. These hostilities had been attended in the first part of the campaign with signal success. The discomfiture of Jourdain in Germany, and the expulsion of the French from Italy, was imputed to the spirit and contributions of Britain, as the ultimate cause and means of the operations. The retreat of Bonaparte from the siege of a fortress, which Englishmen undertook to defend, being his first failure in any military attempt, added to the national exultation. He that had conquered all with whom he contended, from Britons only found he was not invincible. It was not doubted but Britain and her allies would now succeed in repressing the ambition of France, driving her back within her ancient limits, and permanently securing her neighbours from future encroachments. Those who considered the restoration of the Bourbon family as necessary to re-establish in France, and maintain in other countries, religion, justice, property, and social order, trusted that, under Providence, the Russians, wisely seconded and supported, would recal civilization and humanity to France, and prove the saviours of Europe from the barbarizing doctrines and conduct of the republicans. Not those only

who considered the revival of French monarchy as indispensably necessary to the safety of Britain, but the greatest number of the more moderate supporters of the war, expected the campaign of 1799 would be decisively successful. The formidable armament prepared against Holland added to the general hopes. It was confidently expected that such a force, co-operating with the multitudes reported and supposed to be inimical to French supremacy, would recover the united Netherlands, and even co-operate with the archduke in regaining Belgium. The failure of this expedition was a gloomy disappointment. By far the greater majority, estimating plans and execution from the event, without allowing for unforeseen obstacles, supposed that an army of forty thousand men, supported by such a fleet, might have been much more effectual; or that the difficulties might have been foreseen, and that, therefore, the expedition ought not to have been undertaken. They saw that British valour and skill had been exerted in the successive operations, but that the result had been disaster and injurious concession. They hastily and rashly concluded, that either the destination of so very powerful, gallant, and well officered an army, was unwise, or its conduct unskilful, merely because it had not been completely successful. Such precipitancy of judgment spread great dissatisfaction throughout the country; and severe censure was bestowed, before an investigation of facts could ascertain its merits. Accounts also arriving in the close of the year, of the failure of the Russians in Switzerland, and their retreat into Germany, despondency again began to prevail, the people revived their wishes for peace, because they again conceived that no purpose could be answered by continuing the war.

Gloomy prospect.

People again wish for peace.

PARLIAMENT met on the 2d of February 1800. The

Meeting of parliament.

CHAP. LXVI.

1800.

Proposals of the consul to our king.

The first consul of France had at this time indicated to his Britannic majesty a desire of peace. In his letter declaring such a disposition, he appealed to our king in the following terms: "How can the two most enlightened nations of Europe, powerful and strong beyond what their safety and independence require, sacrifice to ideas of vain greatness, the benefits of commerce, internal prosperity, and the happiness of families? How is it that they do not feel that peace is of the first necessity, as well as the first glory? These sentiments cannot be foreign to the heart of your majesty, who reign over a free nation, and with the sole view of rendering it happy. France and England, by the abuse of their strength, may still for a long time, for the misfortune of all nations, retard the period of their being exhausted; but I will venture to say, the fate of all civilized nations is attached to the termination of a war which involves the whole world."

Answer rejecting his proposals;

To this letter, conciliatory in spirit, concise and forcible in argument, an answer was returned, much more copious in detail, but by no means conciliatory: its purport was, that the French government afforded no grounds for trust; the most effectual way to convince Great Britain that France was disposed to resume its former relations, would be the re-establishment of that line of princes, which for so many centuries maintained the French nation in prosperity at home, and in consideration and respect abroad. The king, however, did not prescribe to France the disposition of her executive authority; as soon as he saw that peace could be made with security, he should most readily concert with his allies the means of pacification; but as, in the present state of France, he could not hope for the stability of any treaty, he with other powers must persist in a just and defensive war. The chief consul of France made another attempt at negociation: Talleyrand, the foreign

foreign minister, in a letter to the foreign minister of England, vindicated the conduct of France from the censures contained in lord Grenville's note, and proposed that a suspension of arms should be immediately concluded; and plenipotentiaries sent to Dunkirk, or any other convenient place of meeting; the reply to the second proposal, like the first, consisted of often repeated charges of French aggression, and declared that no peace could be made unless such as was likely to be secure and permanent. The propositions of the French government being laid before parliament, the rejection of the overtures was by ministers defended upon two grounds: the first was, that France still retained those sentiments and views which characterized the dawn, and continued to march with the progress of her revolution: the second, that no safe, honourable, and permanent peace could be made with France in her present situation.[d] From a long detail of his conduct, they endeavoured to prove that no confidence could be reposed in the sincerity of Bonaparte; and though he himself were inclined to preserve good faith, that there was no security for his stability. The censurers of the rejection argued, that abuse of the personal character of the man whom the contending nation had chosen for its head, was neither conciliatory nor beneficial: it was far from tending to procure peace, and certainly did not promote the purpose of war: our glorious successes in wars with France, had come from fighting, not from railing; ministers (Mr. Fox said) in their rage against the adversaries of the old French monarchy, had formed a very indiscriminate idea, that they were all unanimously profligate and unprincipled; such accumulation of abuse had been often bestowed upon the Americans, still we had found it necessary to treat with them at last. Of Bonaparte's character they had

submitted to parliament.

Arguments of ministers; insincerity and instability of Bonaparte.

Of opposition, that Bonaparte is disposed and competent to make peace.

[d] See Parliamentary Debates.

CHAP. LXVI. 1800.

formed a very inadequate estimate: however, even supposing the chief magistrate of France to be as faithless and iniquitous as ministers represented, he could see no inference they could draw from the admission, justificatory of their rejection: were we to enter into no agreement with persons or states whose conduct was demonstrably unjust? Had we not made peace with the Bourbon princes, the tyrants of their own country, and plunderers of their neighbours? Did we reject overtures with Louis XIV. and proclaim as our reason that he had in the midst of peace, seized the provinces of enfeebled Spain, and carried butchery and havoc into the peaceful Palatinate?[c] Did we forbear alliance with the plunderers of Poland? What was our security for either peace with one, or alliance with the other? Certainly their interest; not their faith nor their virtue. We had the same security with Bonaparte: he, like all other statesmen, no doubt, wished to make a peace advantageous to himself and the nation over which he presided. With regard to stability, whether Bonaparte remained chief consul or not, peace and not war was the interest of France. If ministers really wished to continue the war eternally, unless the Bourbon princes were restored, let them reflect on its practicability; the external force of the confederacy had tried it in vain, and from internal efforts it was not to be hoped. The whole property of France, real or personal, in the hands of its present possessors, depended on the existence of the present, or some similar government: it was impossible to restore the princes of the house of Bourbon, without restitution to those who had been exiled in its defence, which in effect raised up the whole property in the nation to support the republic, whatever they might feel concerning its effects: the attempt was as hopeless as the intention was unjust; inconsistent with the

[c] Parliamentary Debates, Feb. 5d, 1800.

objects

objects of the British constitution, and the rights of an independent nation. This country, from an accumulation of causes, principally originating in the war, was in very great distress: ministers had for seven years persevered in their ruinous system; taught by woeful experience, they ought to have at last admitted proposals for peace. These arguments might perhaps appear to many hearers or readers not to be without weight, but they made little impression on the majorities in parliament; and addresses were voted, highly approving of the answer returned by government to Bonaparte.

The rejection of the overtures is approved of by great majorities.

PERSEVERANCE in the war being still determined, preparations for the ensuing campaign came under their consideration. Messages to the respective houses from the king, stated that his majesty was at present employed in concerting such engagements with the emperor of Germany, the elector of Bavaria, and other powers of the empire, as might strengthen the efforts of his imperial majesty, and materially conduce to the advantage of the common cause, in the course of the ensuing campaign.[f] Certain advances would be necessary if the treaties were concluded, and he recommended to his parliament to make provision for such eventual engagements. The arguments against the proposed subsidy, were the inefficacy of all our former subsidies in the present war, and the distressed state of the country, from the enormous load of taxes, and the unprecedented price of the necessaries of life. It was also inferred, that ministers were well assured of the secession of the Russians from the confederacy. The parliamentary majority over-ruled all objections; and the required subsidies were voted. The military and naval force appointed for the service of the year 1800, was nearly the same as in the former year. The income-tax was continued; and including a vote of

German subsidies.

[f] Parliamentary Debates, Feb. 13th, 1800.

CHAP. LXVI.

1800.

credit, there was a lone of twenty-one millions. Amidst the arrangements for the future campaign, opposition proposed an inquiry into the past.[s] An army of forty thousand men had been employed in Holland; had fought most valiantly; but no good purpose, they averred, had been effected; very great losses had been incurred, and very humiliating conditions had been accepted. Did the miscarriage arise from weakness of plan, or tardy preparations? from defective execution; or from resistless bad fortune? To ascertain the cause, they proposed an inquiry. If the disasters were entirely owing to fortune, an inquiry would acquit both the planners and executors; without an inquiry, the one or the other, or both, might be unjustly accused. Ministers endeavoured to prove that the proposers of the expedition had not failed; as besides the ships that surrendered to our fleet, our army had caused a very powerful diversion, and had no doubt contributed to the signal successes of our allies. As the expedition could not be properly said to have failed, an inquiry was totally unnecessary. The opponents replied, that the capitulation to an inferior force required to be investigated, both for the honour and interest of the country; but the motion was rejected by a great majority.

Motion for an inquiry into the expedition to Holland.

rejected by a great majority.

Progress of the intended union with Ireland.

Proposed articles.

THE union between Great Britain and Ireland underwent an ample discussion in both houses of the Irish parliament; eight articles were proposed by the secretary of state, as the foundation of this measure. The first imported, that the two kingdoms should be united on the 1st of January 1801; the second, that the succession to the crown should continue limited and settled, in the same manner as it now stands limited and settled according to the union between England and Scotland; the

[s] Parliamentary Debates, Feb. 10th, 1800.

third,

third, that the same united kingdom should be united in one and the same parliament; the fourth, that four lords spiritual of Ireland, by rotation of sessions, and twenty-eight lords temporal of Ireland elected for life by the peers of Ireland, should be the number to sit and vote, on the part of Ireland, in the house of lords in the parliament of the united kingdoms; the fifth, that the churches of England and Ireland should be united into one protestant episcopal church, to be called "The united Church of England and Ireland;" the sixth article proposed a fair participation of commercial privileges; the seventh left to each kingdom the separate discharge of its public debt, and arranged the proportions of national expense; fifteen parts to be defrayed by Britain, and two by Ireland; the eighth ordained, that the laws and courts of both kingdoms, civil and ecclesiastical, should remain as they were now established, subject however to such alterations as the united legislatures might hereafter deem expedient: all laws, at present in force in either kingdom, which should be contrary to any of the provisions that might be ordained by any act for carrying the above articles into effect, from and after the union, should be repealed. Irish ministers supported the union as in its principle and objects mutually beneficial to the contracting parties; in its articles, thoroughly consonant to these principles, conducive to the commercial and political improvement of both, and peculiarly advantageous to Ireland. The legislative weight of the respective countries was, they said, apportioned to the compound result of the population and contribution, and a majority of the people was favourable to the union. The measure was opposed, as tending to render Ireland a dependence upon England. The legislative portion allowed by these propositions to Ireland was inadequate. The

Arguments for and against.

two

CHAP. LXVI. 1800.

two nations were now identified by this junction of legislature: the transfer of legislature from Ireland to England would drain the country, without affording any adequate reflux to Ireland. No authentic documents had established the arguments of the unionists, that legislation was by this treaty apportioned to population and contribution. It was merely an assertion without a proof, and therefore ought not to be the foundation of a political arrangement. Before so great a change was permitted, an appeal should be made to the people: if the Irish in general did not oppose the new scheme, their inaction was owing, not to conviction of its utility, but to fear of the immense military force employed by government in Ireland. These reasons were urged both in debates and protests; the project of union however was adopted by a great majority in both houses. The concurrence of the Irish parliament with their plan of union being communicated to the British, the respective resolutions were reciprocally ratified, and a bill founded on them was introduced. On the 2d of July, it received the royal assent; and it was provided that the union between Great Britain and Ireland should commence on the 1st of January 1801, being the first day of the nineteenth century. The suspension of the habeas corpus was, after a considerable discussion, continued.

The plan of union and time of commencement are finally fixed by both parliaments.

Dearness of provisions.

PROVISIONS being during this session uncommonly high, attracted the attention of parliament. Mr. Pitt, on the soundest principles of political economy, sanctioned by the authority of the ablest writers[h], had abstained from all interference in the corn market. The speculations of individuals he conceived were more likely to produce an adequate supply of foreign wheat at the present crisis, than any other measure that could be adopted. The

[h] See Wealth of Nations, on the corn laws.

legislature

legislature confined its attention to the contrivance of substitutes, and diminution of consumption. Committees appointed by both houses reported, that, although a considerable importation of wheat from foreign countries had already taken place, and more might be expected, yet they felt they should not discharge their duty, unless they strongly recommended to all individuals, to use every means in their power to reduce the consumption of wheaten flower in their families, and encourage in the districts in which they lived, by their example, influence, and authority, every possible economy in this article. They farther recommended, that all charity and parochial relief should be given, as far as was practicable, in any other article except bread, and flour; and that the part of it which was necessary for the sustenance of the poor, should be distributed in soups, rice, potatoes, or other substitutes. They were of opinion that, if this regulation were generally adopted, it would not only, in a very great degree, contribute to economize at that time the consumption of flour, but that it might have the effect of gradually introducing into use a more wholesome and nutritious species of food than that to which the poor were at present accustomed. From the evidence of bakers it appeared, that the consumption of bread baked for some hours was much less considerable than if eaten new. At the instance of the committee, a bill was brought in, prohibiting bakers from exposing any bread for sale which had not been baked twenty-four hours; and immediately passed into a law. In considering the scarcity, opposition, investigating its causes, derived them chiefly from the war; and various incidental debates took place on the subject. Mr. Pitt, from a detailed view of the price of provisions during the whole contest, argued that if the scarceness had

Corn and bread bill.

CHAP. LXVI. 1800.

had arisen from the war, the increase would have been progressive; whereas the prices in 1796, 1797, and 1798, had been as low as in peace, and the rise had not taken place till 1799; and was obviously imputable to the wet, late, and unproductive harvest.

Bill of lord Auckland concerning the marriage of divorced persons.

WITH the necessaries of life, public morals occupied the attention of the legislature. The crime of adultery being extremely prevalent, was by many supposed to exceed in frequency the dissolution of former times. It was conceived by various political moralists, that the permission granted to the offending parties, after a divorce, to intermarry, was one powerful cause of the seduction of married women. To remove this incentive, lord Auckland proposed a bill, making it unlawful for any person, on account of whose adultery a bill of divorce should be applied for in that house, to intermarry with the woman from whom the complaining party might be divorced. This restriction, his lordship observed, had always prevailed, and still did prevail in Scotland, where the parties, after being divorced, were never permitted to marry. The diversity of the case here, in his opinion, in a great measure accounted for the prevalence of the crime. This bill was strongly contested in the house; both the supporters and opponents admitted and lamented the frequency of a crime, cutting asunder the most important ties of social life; both shewed themselves friends of religion and morality, pursuing the same object through different means. Lord Auckland reasoned, that the certain preclusion from subsequent marriage, would in many cases operate as a preventative of the crime; the force of their reasoning obviously depended upon the admission of a general fact, that the hopes, or at least the probability, of a future permanent relation, facilitated the temporary success of a seducer.

1800.

seducer. The opponents of the bill, the most active of whom was the duke of Clarence, took a different view of the tendency of circumstances and situation; in determining female affections and conduct: the prohibition would not act as a discouragement of the vice; the obstacle might inflame the passion, and furnish new materials to the dexterity of an accomplished seducer. Inefficacious to the prevention of the crime, it would produce the most pernicious consequences to the weaker of the parties concerned in the commission. Heinous and hurtful as this vice was, still it was possible that the seduced person might not be entirely profligate and abandoned. To the preservation of virtue, next in moral wisdom was recovery from vice, before it became habitual and inveterate: the present bill, if passed into a law, would drive the females to desperation and unrestrained licentiousness. Lord Carlisle also very strenuously opposed the bill in question: the law lords, and the bishops in general, supported lord Auckland's proposition; but it was rejected by a considerable majority. This bill attracted the public attention much more than any measure which was introduced into parliament, in the course of the whole session. It was supported by the highest political, legal; and ecclesiastical authority; was evidently devised from the best intentions, and framed with great ability: it may however be doubted whether the prospect of the restriction, would in many instances prevent the crime; and it was morally certain that after it was committed, the restriction itself must powerfully tend to drive a female to infamous profligacy.

The duke of Clarence's view of the subject.

Arguments for and against;

is rejected:

warmly engages the public attention.

An incident that happened near the close of this session warmly interested the feelings, not only of both houses of parliament, but of the whole nation. On the 15th of May, his majesty went to the theatre-

Attempt at the theatre to assassinate our sovereign;

CHAP. LXVI.

1800.

theatre-royal, Drury-lane: as he was entering the box, a man in the pit near the orchestra, on the right hand side, suddenly stood up and discharged a pistol at the royal person. The king had advanced about four steps from the door: on the report of the pistol, his majesty stopped, and stood firmly. The house was immediately in an uproar, and the cry of "Seize him!" resounded from every part of the theatre: the king, not the least disconcerted, came nearly to the front of the box. The man who had fired it was immediately dragged into the orchestra, and carried behind the scenes: his name was found to be Hadfield. Being examined by a magistrate, he exhibited symptoms of insanity; though some of his answers were rational. The veneration and love that the nation bore to his majesty's person, was by this accident awakened into an enthusiastic joy at his escape; even the spirit of faction was lost in a general stream of loyalty and exultation. Addresses of congratulation on the king's escape were presented by both houses of parliament, the universities, the corporation of London, and, in a word, by all the other corporations as well as the counties. Hadfield was tried in the court of king's bench for high treason; and it was proved that he had been for some years insane, chiefly in consequence of wounds received in his head, when he acted as a serjeant in the army, in 1794, in Holland: he was therefore acquitted, but not discharged. In consequence of Hadfield's act, and repeated instances of insanity, being directed against a personage whose safety was so dear and important to the state, two additional clauses, by way of amendments, were added to the insanity bill. The first was to hinder individuals confined for alleged lunacy, from being bailed, in any circumstances, without the concurrence of one of the magistrates who committed him; except by the judges, or at the quarter sessions of the peace.

is found to arise from lunacy.

Anxious alarm of the public.

Amendment to the insanity bill.

The

The second clause proceeded on a principle similar to the first, namely, security. The second clause provided more especially for the personal safety of the sovereign, repeatedly endangered by insane persons. These provisions were the last important acts of this session of parliament, which was prorogued on the 29th of July.

Parliament rises.

CHAP. LXVII.

France — conciliatory efforts of Bonaparte — he invites the emigrants to return — insurrection not entirely crushed — he reduces the royalists' army of reserve — State of the confederates and of France — plan of the campaign — state of affairs in Italy — the Austrians invest Genoa — assisted by the British fleet — gallant defence of the republicans — Massena is permitted to evacuate Genoa. — Bonaparte prepares to restore the French affairs in Italy — Moreau invades Germany — his able manœuvres to divert the enemy, while he assisted the army of Italy. — Bonaparte takes the field to retrieve the affairs of the French in Italy — rapid and astonishing march over the Alps — progress in Italy — battle of Marengo — danger of the consular army — means of extrication — signal victory — decides the fate of Italy — armistice between the chief consul and the Austrian commander — Italy surrenders to Bonaparte — measures of Bonaparte for settling the country — having effected his purpose, Bonaparte returns to Paris. — Moreau advances into Bavaria — armistice and overtures for peace. — The emperor receives a new subsidy from England — proposes to include Britain in the negotiation — Bonaparte refuses — prolongation of the armistice — expiration, and renewal of hostilities — operations — partial successes of the Austrians — battle of Hohenlinden — the French gain a decisive victory — the emperor sues for peace — review of this extraordinary campaign — war is terminated between France and Austria. — Operations of the British forces — expedition on the coast of France — attempt on Ferrol — on Cadiz — reduction of Malta — Egypt — convention for the evacuation of it by the French — guaranteed by sir Sidney Smith — ministers, not knowing this guarantee, refuse to ratify the convention — Kleber, the French general, renews hostilities — new negotiation is broken off. — West Indies — capture of Curacoa. — East Indies — wise administration of the governor-general.

CHAP. LXVII.

1800.

THE principal and most memorable events of 1800, arose from Bonaparte. The glory of the French

French arms, had, in the absence of the conqueror of Italy, begun to decline: he now appeared, on his return, to be the only arbiter who could change the course of affairs, and the destinies of France; and the name of king or emperor alone was wanting to Bonaparte. With a senate appointed by himself, and recruited from year to year by his sole influence; he possessed the nomination of all officers, civil, political, military, and naval; the command and distribution of the whole military and naval force of the empire; the power of foreign negotiation on peace, war, and commerce; a complete, though indirect, control over the treasury; the sole privilege of proposing laws, and withdrawing them in any stage of deliberation or discussion. Being established as executive magistrate of France, he perceived the staggering state of the interior parts of the republic, and learned the consequence of the defeats which the French had suffered in Italy. Encouraged by the late failures of the republicans, the royalists in Britanny and Normandy had again taken arms; and their numbers in November amounted to sixty thousand. Bonaparte saw that effectual as a force might be against the internal enemies of the republic, conciliation was much more beneficial. His general plan was to conciliate as many enemies of the republic as possible: he and all the members of the new government expressed a desire of peace, not only with the royalist armies of France, but even emigrants; and published a proclamation, inviting exiles to return. Great numbers of loyalists, on the faith of government, daily returned to France; among these the *constitutionalists*, or favourers of mixed monarchy and democracy, were permitted to come back: the greater number of those that fled in the time of Robespierre, or at the convulsion in September 1797, were invited to their country: even estates were restored, so far as the restitution

Conciliatory efforts of Bonaparte.

He invites the emigrants to return.

CHAP. LXVII.

1800.

Insurrection entirely crushed.

He reduces the royalists.

Army of reserve.

State of the confederates, and of France.

did not violate the new tenures of landed property. Notwithstanding the anxious endeavours of Bonaparte, the Chouans still persisted in revolt, and cultivated a correspondence with the British fleet. In the beginning of the year, the chief consul detached a considerable part of the insurgents from the hostile confederacy against the French republic: where pacific measures did not succeed, he very effectually employed force and severity, and early in spring entirely crushed the insurrection.

HAVING established intestine tranquillity, and endeavoured in vain to negociate a peace with foreign opponents, Bonaparte prepared for prosecuting the war. He published a proclamation in February, complaining of the obstinate resolution of the English to continue hostilities, and inviting the French to furnish the subsidies and men that were necessary for acquiring peace by force of arms. It was also at the same time deemed expedient by the consuls, that an army of reserve should be raised, to consist of sixty thousand men, composed of conscripts, and to be assembled at Dijon, where the first consul himself was to take the command of it in person. The Austrians had now recovered all Italy, except the small republic of Genoa; and their army was distributed in winter quarters through Piedmont and Lombardy. The Austrians, seconded by the English, prepared for military operations with great alacrity and vigour: even the abettors of peace, and among these the archduke Charles knew, that the most effectual instruments of a fair and favourable accommodation, were an immense body of troops ready for action. The armies were recruited, and a very strong and numerous force was prepared. The imperial forces of Switzerland and Italy occupied a semi-circular line of communication, extending from the frontiers of Suabia to the coasts of the Mediterranean.

The

The republican armies occupied the positions facing their enemy in an irregular line from Genoa to the valley of the Rhine; but the army of Genoa being blockaded by an English fleet under lord Keith, they were extremely straitened for provisions, and were in number very much inferior to the enemy: from the Var to Genoa, there were scarcely twenty-five thousand, almost all infantry. A reinforcement of fifteen thousand men from Switzerland and France were on their march to join the army of Italy; others were likewise promised; but those which had arrived, were few in number; and so great was the void in the ranks of the French army, produced by an epidemic fever, and by desertion, that Massena, in the month of April, had not more than thirty-five thousand men in the whole extent of the country of Nice, and of the state of Genoa: the distresses of the troops, during the rigours of winter, were very severe, and many of the soldiers were either dispirited or discontented. Notwithstanding those unpromising appearances, Bonaparte proposed a bold, vigorous, and comprehensive plan of offensive operations: to invade Germany, drive the enemy from Switzerland, and recover Italy, by a co-operating line of armies. Moreau commanded the army of the Upper Rhine, which, by the indefatigable activity of the chief consul, amounted to 100,000 men, extending from Switzerland to Mentz; on the left wing was secured by Prussian neutrality, on the rear was protected by its communication with France and Belgium, and on the right was covered by the Helvetic Alps: with this formidable host he directed his course towards Vienna. Ill health, together with court intrigues, obliged the archduke Charles to resign the chief command of the army of the Rhine, and he was succeeded by general Kray, an officer well fitted for so high and important a trust. Bonaparte in his efforts on the

Plan of the campaign;

CHAP. LXVII. 1800.

side of Germany, had a double purpose, and intended not only to make an impression on that quarter, but to draw off the attention of the enemy from his plans for the recovery of Italy; which, by those who in considering military situations had not included extraordinary genius, was supposed desperate. The chief consul appointed Massena, who had so eminently distinguished himself in Switzerland, to maintain the French positions there, until he should put his own grand designs in execution.

State of affairs in Italy.

Melas, early in spring, made dispositions for investing Genoa, which was already so closely blockaded from maritime intercourse by lord Keith. Massena endeavoured to obstruct their approach, and effected all that skill, valour, and discipline could perform against skill, valour, discipline, and superior numbers. He repulsed them in various conflicts; but was more frequently overpowered, and at length compelled to retreat; and on the 30th of April, the Austrians appeared before the city. On land the French were pressed by the German army; from the sea, the city was bombarded by the English fleet; within the walls, famine, and its never-failing attendant pestilence, joined with conflagration in making the people loudly clamorous for a surrender, and with difficulty they were restrained from actual insurrection.

The Austrians invest Genoa,

assisted by the British fleet.

Gallant defence of the republicans.

Amidst these complicated evils, the republicans during the whole month of May, not only resisted, but often defeated the Austrians, until they were at length exhausted by their own victories. Massena, aware that relief was approaching, wished to maintain it much longer, but found it impracticable; he accordingly opened a negociation with the British admiral and the Austrian general, and obtained very favourable and honourable terms. He was permitted to evacuate Genoa with his troops, and procured provisions and a safe conduct. In his conference, the sagacious Frenchman penetrated into the acuteness and intelligence of the English com-

Massena is permitted to evacuate Genoa.

commander, and bestowed a just tribute of praise on the superiority of the British character, and the efficacy of the British force. By the fall of Genoa many politicans considered the fate of Italy as entirely decided, and the hopes of France as totally destroyed: but the imperialists had still another general to encounter, whom they were destined never to combat without defeat and discomfiture. In stationing his army of reserve in the plains of Burgundy, the chief consul intended to afford assistance either in Italy or Germany, as occasion might require; but he was chiefly anxious to direct his efforts to Italy, where they were most wanted. With Moreau he had concerted the plan of the campaign, according to which their operations, though distant, might be managed in concert, on a great scale, and with as much precision as the evolutions of the two wings of the same army. The object of Moreau's expedition was, by a series of feints, not less than attacks, to occupy the attention of general Kray, to strike terror into the heart of Germany, to alarm the Austrians for the safety of the capital, and, at the same time, to maintain a communication with the French army in Italy, and send seasonable reinforcements.

Bonaparte prepares to relieve the French affairs in Italy.

To execute his part of the plan, Moreau, on the 25th of April, crossed the Rhine in four divisions, and formed a junction of the whole army in Suabia, with the lake of Constance on his right: by various feints and other manœuvres he turned the right wing of the enemy's army; and in a series of engagements very bravely fought on both sides, he was so successful in the result, as to command Franconia and Suabia on the left, lay both under contributions, and intercept supplies, and destroy magazines. In front he occupied the attention of the whole Austrian army, while on the right he was able to send detachments to the south. He kept Kray so completely employed

Moreau invades Germany.

CHAP. LXVII.

ployed in counteracting his pretended designs; that he did not dive into his real intentions; and for near two months, Moreau sought nothing further than to amuse general Kray; by marches and counter-marches, by threatened sieges, and feigned irruptions, to alarm the Austrians for the safety of the hereditary states, and prevent them from paying any attention to the affairs of Italy.

1800.

His able manœuvers to divert the enemy, while he assists the army of Italy.

Bonaparte takes the field to retrieve the affairs of the French in Italy.

WHILE professional experience and tactical skill were thus, in Germany, overborne by the paramount power of genius; in Italy its efficacy was still more forcibly, brilliantly, and successfully exercised. Informed of the critical situation of Massena, the chief consul resolved to march into Italy with the utmost expedition, and to surmount every difficulty in the passage of the Alps, in order to attack the rear of the Austrian army. On the 15th of May, his army reached St. Bernard, where the transportation of the artillery was extremely difficult: but by soldiers inspired with enthusiastic admiration for their renowned general, the difficulty was speedily overcome; every piece of cannon was dismounted, and placed in troughs hollowed out of trees cut down for the purpose. These were drawn by five or six hundred men, according to the size and weight of the piece; the wheels fixed to poles, were borne on men's shoulders; tumbrils were emptied and placed on sledges, together with the axle-trees. This difficult march he executed with such rapidity, that notwithstanding an immense train of artillery, he had made his way through all the defiles in spite of the opposing enemy, by the 26th of May. The Austrians were obliged to evacuate Milan and Pavia. The French vanguard, having crossed the Po, encountered an advanced corps of the imperialists, and defeated them with considerable loss at Montebello; not, however decisively. The main body of the Austrian forces now arrived from Genoa, and fixed its head-quarters

Rapid and astonishing march over the Alps.

Progress in Italy.

ters at Alessandria. Bonaparte came forward into a plain between Alessandria and Tortona, and both sides prepared for a general engagement. The French commander with the van of the army, on the 15th of June had advanced as far as the village of Marengo. Early the following morning he saw the Austrian line extending opposite to him, about six miles in length. Dessaix, with the rear division of the French, was not yet arrived. About noon the battle began: Bonaparte, though with so inferior a force, withstood the weight of the Austrian column with equal intrepidity and ability. The immense host however of the imperialists was making a very powerful impression. The left wing of the French began to give way, the centre and right to follow the example, and disorder was evident through the whole line. The Austrians perceiving the advantage, pressed forward, with an impetuosity which was inspirited by confident expectations of certain victory, to strike a finishing blow. The garrison of Tortona, seeing the confusion of the enemy, sallied out, and nearly surrounded the consular troops. Every movement appeared to forbode the total overthrow of Bonaparte. Undismayed by the impending danger, the general was foremost among the ranks, rallied his troops, and led them again to battle: his grand purpose was to prevent a route, until Dessaix, who was now near should arrive. To render the overpowering numbers of the enemy less efficient, he seized a defile flanked by the village, there made a firm stand, bayonet to bayonet, though the Austrian infantry were seconded by a battery of thirty pieces of cannon, that played with tremendous effect. This unyielding resistance produced the consequence which the general had hoped; the rear division now arrived; the French combatants revived by this reinforcement, and assisted by a fresh corps, charged the enemy with enthusiastic

CHAP. LXVII. 1800.

Battle of Marengo.

Danger of the consular army.

Means of extrication.

CHAP. LXVII.

1800.

ardour: but still the event was extremely doubtful, when a movement of the Austrian general gave a fatal turn. Melas found he could not force the defile; but, elated with success, and not informed that the reinforcement was arrived, he extended his line in order to surround the enemy. Bonaparte, perceiving this change of position, instantaneously saw how it might be improved: hastily he abandoned the defile; and, formed into a strong column, the consular troops pressed on the Austrians where their front was weakened by extension. Of the French, besides the strength of their disposition, a great portion was quite fresh; the Austrians, besides their weakened arrangement, were fatigued and exhausted, by the preceding efforts of the day. The French broke the line of the imperialists, bore down all before them, put the enemy completely to the route, and obtained a victory which decided the fate of Italy. All the united efforts of Suwarrow and his Russians, of the Austrian generals and their gallant troops, which had rendered the Italian campaign of 1799 so signally successful to the confederates, were now undone by the overwhelming genius of Bonaparte. The fruits of all the British subsidies which set those operose bodies in motion, were blasted at Marengo.

Signal victory,

decides the fate of Italy.

Armistice between the chief consul and the Austrian commanders.

THE Austrian general finding it impossible any longer to defend Italy, applied for an armistice until a message should be sent to Vienna. Bonaparte granted his request, on agreeing to a conditional convention, the validity of which was to depend upon the ratification of the emperor, and the consul sent an envoy offering peace. The terms proposed by the conqueror were, in the relative state of the belligerent powers, wisely moderate. The Austrian army should retire within the line established by the treaty of Campo Formio; the Austrians should occupy the north-east corner of Italy,

bounded

bounded by the Po on the south, and the Mincio on the west: Tuscany was to be a neutral state. Whatever answer should be returned from Vienna to these propositions, it was agreed that the armistice should not be broken without ten days' previous notice. Meanwhile the fortresses, cities, and country, in the north and north-west of Italy, all surrendered to his arms.

CHAP. LXVII. 1800.

Italy surrenders to Bonaparte.

HAVING reconquered Italy, Bonaparte next considered its political settlement. He now resolved that Lombardy and Liguria should form, instead of two, one very powerful republic; and declared that resolution in a speech at Milan. He established a provincial administration, and a *consult* for preparing for the republic a constitution and legislature: he gave orders for respecting religion, and the property of all citizens without distinction. Citizens, who had fled from their country, were invited to return; with the exception of such as had taken arms against the Cisalpine republic, after the treaty of Campo Formio. The chief consul having effected those momentous changes in the state of affairs in Italy, returned to Paris.

Measures of Bonaparte for settling that country.

Having effected his purposes, Bonaparte returns to Paris.

Meanwhile Moreau, in co-operation with Bonaparte, resumed an offensive campaign. Having already manifested his genius in the dexterous and consummate prudence which suited his situation, Moreau now shewed enterprise as active, energetic, and decisive, as his caution had been wise. The republicans were now arrived at Blenheim, so fatal to their monarch when contending with a British hero. To cross the Danube, the French general had neither bridges nor boats, as both had been destroyed by the Austrians; who, possessing the opposite bank, rendered it apparently impossible. To remove this obstacle, Moreau bethought himself of an expedient, manifesting that combination of courage and genius, which has so eminently distinguished the republican warriors of France in

Germany. Moreau resumes offensive operations.

CHAP. LXVII. 1800.

this arduous contest. Eighty soldiers undertook to swim across the river; and when armed with muskets and knapsacks, sent in two small boats for their use, to secure the bank. This enterprise they effected: they took possession of the villages of Grensheim and Blenheim, seized several pieces of cannon; these they manned with artillery-men, who had passed upon ladders, placed on the wrecks of the bridge. The republicans thus occupying the left bank, maintained their positions with extraordinary courage, while a great number of miners and bridge-builders, though exposed to the enemy, completed the repairs, and enabled the army to cross the river. The republicans having succeeded in their attempt, the Austrian army fell back from Ulm, and retired towards Bavaria. Moreau took possession of Munich, and laid the Bavarian territories under heavy contributions: the elector was compelled to pay to the French a great part of the subsidy of five hundred thousand pounds which he had received from Britain: the republicans also laid the duchy of Wirtemberg under a severe contribution. The right wing, commanded by Lecourbe, drove the Austrians entirely from the Grisons, and entered the Tyrol; while on the left, a new army of French and Batavians were preparing to enter Germany, to penetrate into Franconia and Bohemia. Animated by the exhortation and example of Britain, and supplied by her treasures, the emperor had hitherto refused the terms offered by the republicans; but, as their armies now menaced the very heart of his dominions, he judged it expedient to sue for an armistice, which Moreau, with the approbation of Bonaparte, granted on the 14th of July. On the 28th of the same month, St. Julien, envoy from Francis, in the name of his imperial majesty, signed at Paris the preliminaries of peace, on the basis of the treaty of Campo Formio; on the part of the French, they were signed by the minister of foreign

Moreau advances into Bavaria.

Armistice, and overtures for peace.

1809.

reign affairs, the ex-bishop Talleyrand. Meanwhile, the emperor received a subsidy of two millions sterling from England, and had concluded a new treaty, by which the contracting parties stipulated, for the one not to make peace without comprehending the other: the emperor, adhering to this engagement, endeavoured to include Britain in the negociation. But it was the uniform policy of Bonaparte, to detach the members of the confederacy, and to listen to no terms but of separate peace. The emperor refused to ratify the preliminaries, alleging that St. Julien had exceeded his powers. The armistice was to expire on the 7th of September; the French government directed its generals to begin hostilities that day. The emperor, imputing the rupture to the French, put himself at the head of the army, and endeavoured to rouse the force of Germany in defence of the empire; but the king of Prussia, in neutrality hostile, kept the whole north of Germany in the same inaction with himself, and intimidated its weaker princes from sending assistance to the head of the empire, and contributing to the repression of such formidable invaders. His imperial majesty proposed the prolongation of the armistice: the chief consul declared, that he would not waste the rest of autumn in idle conferences; or expose himself to endless diplomatic discussions, without securities for the sincerity of the enemy's intentions: the securities which he demanded were Philipsburg, Ulm, and Ingolstadt, with their dependent forts. This condition, though it laid the hereditary dominions of Austria in a great measure at the mercy of the enemy, being agreed to at Hohenlinden, a suspension of arms was concluded for forty-five days, commencing from the 21st of September. This interval was occupied by both parties in formidable preparations. Moreau's army was seconded on the left by Angereau, prepared with the French and Batavians to invade Germany from

The emperor receives a new subsidy from England.

Proposes to include Britain in the negociation.

Bonaparte refuses.

Prolongation of the armistice.

CHAP. LXVII.

1800.

Expiration, and renewal of hostilities,

Operations, partial successes of the Austrians.

from the Maine: and on the left the army of the Helvetic Rhine, commanded by Macdonald, advanced as far as the entry of the Tyrol, and was ready to proceed on the first signal. The armistice expiring, the army of the left crossing the Rhine, defeated the Austrians in a series of engagements, penetrated through Franconia to the confines of Bohemia, and ascertained its communication with the army of the centre in Bavaria. Macdonald, defying the severities of an Alpine winter, pushed forward from the Grisons to the Valteline, drove the Austrians before him wherever he came, and supported by the army of Italy, was ready to advance to Austria, menaced by a still more formidable danger from the west. Moreau, with the grand and centrical army, resumed offensive operations on the 29th of November. The Austrians commanded by the archduke John, fourth brother of the emperor, making a very powerful resistance, repulsed the French army, and in their turn attacking their posts, obtained considerable advantages. Encouraged by these successes, the young prince ventured a general assault on the lines of the enemy at Hohenlinden, on the 3d of December. The archduke had no sooner begun his march, than there fell a heavy shower of snow and sleet, by which he was so much retarded, that only the central column had arrived at the place of destination, at a time when all the divisions ought to have been ready for action. A division of the French, conducted by Richepanse, pierced between the left wing of the Austrians, and the centre, reached the great road behind the centre, and assaulted the left flank and rear of that column, at a moment when it had formed in front, and commenced an attack.[a] The Austrians, with their usual courage, maintained the conflict for several hours, but were

They assault the French lines.

Battle of Hohenlinden.

[a] See Annual Register, for 1800, p. 208.

at

CHAP. LXVII.

1800.

at length broken by the impetuosity of the French, thrown into irretrievable confusion, and entirely defeated with the loss of fifteen thousand men killed or taken prisoners. The battle of Hohenlinden decided the contest: the emperor found it impossible to stand against the rapidly advancing line of armies, every where victorious. The British court, sensible of the alarming situation in which the emperor was placed, released him from his engagements: he renewed his negociations with the French, which have since terminated in the peace of Luneville: and thus ended a campaign between Austria and France, in which German valour, discipline, tactical skill, and military experience, having to contend with French valour, discipline, experience, and skill, invigorated and guided by genius, demonstrated the inefficacy of mere customary expertness and precedented usage, when, in new combinations and arduous circumstances, they had to contend with rapid, fertile, and energetic invention. The grand design of Bonaparte comprehended every vulnerable point of the enemy; uniform in object, and consistent in plan, he, with rapid versatility, varied operations as circumstances changed; choosing his generals and officers according to their fitness; he brought or sent with the mass of French courage and force transcendant ability to guide it to its ends; and thereby completely effected his purposes: he recovered what had been lost, and compelled his enemy to sue for peace, which had been constantly and avowedly the object of his stupendous efforts in war.

The French gain a decisive victory.

The emperor sues for peace.

Review of this extraordinary campaign.

War is terminated between France and Austria.

While the chief consul thus crushed every hope that Britain had derived from continuing the war on the continent, this country undertook several expeditions, either entirely maritime, or in which her naval power could co-operate with her efforts by land. A squadron, under the command of sir Edward

Operation of the British forces.

CHAP. LXVII.

1800. Expeditions on the coast of France.

Edward Pellew, attacked the south-west of the peninsula of Quiberon, on the coasts of Bretagne, silenced the forts, and cleared the shore of the enemy; a party of soldiers then landed and destroyed the forts. [b] An attack was afterward made on various posts, and six brigs, sloops, and gun-vessels, were taken, a corvette burned, and a fort dismantled. This success was soon followed by an interception of supplies destined for the use of the French fleet at Brest. On the 8th of July, an attempt was made to take or destroy four frigates in the road of Dunkirk: captain Campbell [c], of the Dart, took the La Desirée, but the other ships, in number three, escaped, though not without considerable damage. An exploit performed by lieutenant Jeremiah Coghlan, about this time, excited high admiration, and is a signal instance of the personal prowess, energetic courage, and unyielding intrepidity which combine in British heroism. This young gentleman was commandant of the Viper cutter, under the orders of sir Edward Pellew, and watching Port Louis, near l'Orient in Britanny: he conceived a design of cutting out some of the gun-boats that were at the entrance of the harbour: with the permission of Pellew, he made the attempt in a ten-oared cutter: with a midshipman and eighteen sailors, the gallant youth determined on boarding a gun-brig, mounting three twenty-four pounders, and four six-pounders, having her full complement of men, and within pistol-shot of three batteries. On the night of the 29th of July, he and his valiant comrades undertook the enterprise; they boarded the brig, and though her crew consisted of eighty-seven, charged the enemy, who made a gallant resistance, and repeatedly repulsed their assailants; but the British handful returned to the charge, and with the loss of one

[b] Annual Register, 1800, p. 212.
[c] See London Gazette, July 12th, 1800.

killed

killed and eight wounded, including the commandant himself, our twenty countrymen overpowered their eighty-seven enemies, and made a prize of the brig.[d] Sir Charles Hamilton[e] appearing with a small squadron near Goree, on the coast of Africa, the governor surrendered, and a British garrison took immediate possession of the forts, and of Joul, a dependent factory. In August, a fleet under the command of sir John Borlase Warren, with a military force under the orders of sir James Murray Pulteney, set sail on a secret expedition. One object of this was, the conquest of Bellisle; but the strong works that had been provided for the defence of that island, discouraged the attempt. The armament therefore proceeded to the coast of Spain; and on the 25th of August, arrived before the harbour of Ferrol. Our troops effected a landing, but finding, on examining the ground, that an attempt to storm the place would be impracticable, they re-embarked. Sir Ralph Abercrombie, with an army of about twenty thousand men, and a fleet of twenty ships of the line, commanded by lord Keith, appeared off Cadiz. An epidemic disease now raged in this city with pestilential violence. The governor of Cadiz sent a letter to the English admiral, stating to him the situation of the inhabitants, and the universal odium which must attend an attack on a city so afflicted by the visitation of heaven. The British commander replied, that as the ships in the harbour were to be employed in increasing the naval force of the French republic, they could avert an attack only by surrendering the vessels. To this requisition the governor would not agree, and declared a resolution of defending the place to the last extremity. The works were very strong: the strength, how-

CHAP. LXVII.

1800.

Attempt on Ferrol.

[d] See letters of sir Edward Pellew and lord St. Vincent, in the London Gazette of August 9th, 1800.

[e] London Gazette, July 8th, 1800.

ever

CHAP. LXVII.

1800.

ever, of the place was much less formidable than the dreadful distemper, which indeed was a species of plague. The armament proceeded to the Mediterranean, where, as it afterwards appeared, it was principally destined to act. A detachment reduced the island of Malta: there, and in Minorca, lately captured from Spain, the troops were chiefly stationed, until dispositions were made to carry into effect the ultimate purpose of the expedition.

Reduction of Malta.

Egypt.

Convention for the evacuation of, by the French, guaranteed by sir Sidney Smith.

WHEN Bonaparte left Egypt, in the close of 1799, he had conferred the chief command of the army on general Kleber. Before his departure he had made overtures for a pacification with the Ottomans; and a convention for the evacuation of Egypt was settled between the French republic and the Turks, January 24th, 1800, and agreed to by sir Sidney Smith.[f] The British ministers heard of the convention before they were informed that it was guaranteed by sir Sidney Smith; and apprehensive that if the French army returned, such a force might powerfully affect the war in Italy and Germany, they ordered lord Keith not to ratify any convention formed for that purpose. Kleber having demanded from lord Keith a safe conduct for the return of his army to France, the British admiral, agreeably to his instructions, declared he would not suffer him to pass unmolested. Meanwhile the grand vizier, with a Turkish army, having taken possession of many posts which the French had evacuated, demanded the immediate surrender of Cairo. General Kleber, urging that the English were hostile to the convention, refused to deprive his endangered army of so important a station, and announced his intention of renewing the war. On the 18th of March, he attacked a body of Turks, and routed them: he then engaged the grand army, and ob-

Kleber the French general renews hostilities.

[f] See State Papers, January 24th, 1800.

tained

tained a complete victory. The British court, understanding that the convention had been sanctioned by sir Sidney Smith, though not pleased with an act in which they considered him as having exceeded his instructions, to preserve the character of British faith, ordered the treaty to be ratified. Kleber consented to renew the negotiation; but before matters were brought to a conclusion, he was himself assassinated by a Turkish aga, and succeeded in the command by general Menou. From this time the negotiation appears to have been discontinued, and Menou to have resolved to defend Egypt to the last. Such was the state of affairs in that quarter of the world at the end of 1800. In the West Indies, the important island of Curacoa, belonging to the Dutch, was reduced by Britain. In the East Indies, the remains of the war with Mysore were completely crushed, and earl Mornington, now created marquis Wellesley, was wisely and successfully employed in promoting the civil, commercial, literary, and political improvement of a country, which he had so effectually freed from the great military disturber of its peace and happiness.

CHAP. LXVII. 1800.

New negotiation.

is broken off.

West Indies, capture of Curacoa.

East Indies, wise administration of the governor-general.

CHAP. LXVIII.

Britain — high price of provisions — riots in September — disturbance in London — vigour and activity of the volunteer associations — the tumults are quelled without bloodshed. — Negotiations for peace with France — French propositions deemed inadmissible by Britain. — Last meeting of the British parliament — inquiries concerning the price of corn — the scarcity is, by opposition, imputed to the war, which ministers deny — propositions for the interference of the legislature in the price of corn — rejected with great disapprobation — regulations for diminishing consumption, and encouraging importation — discussion of the late negotiation — supplies. — State of affairs at the meeting of the united parliament — disputes with the northern powers — public law of Europe, relative to belligerent and neutral nations. — Conduct of the northern powers — Denmark and Sweden — discussion with Denmark. — Russia — rise and progress of Paul's enmity to Europe — interest of all nations to cultivate peace with Britain — efforts of Bonaparte to promote the hostile intentions of Paul towards England — lawless acts of Paul — embargo on British shipping. — Northern confederacy — the subject is discussed in the united parliament — unexpected change of ministry. — Short review of the late eventful administration — Mr. Pitt's situation the most arduous of any recorded in the history of cabinets — new administration — alarming illness of the king — anxious concern of the people — recovery. — Inquiries concerning the last campaign — supplies — loans — taxes — additional imposts upon paper — effects of — liberal and wise bill of lord Moira, for the relief of insolvent debtors — farther regulations for encouraging the importation of wheat — session rises.

CHAP. LXVIII. 1800.

IN Britain, the year 1800 was chiefly distinguished by the exorbitant price of the necessaries of life. This dreadful evil had progressively increased during

1800. Britain.

during the summer; but was borne with meritorious patience, in the hopes and belief, that the growing crop, alleged to be generally promising, would remove the calamity. When harvest commenced, the prices fell with considerable rapidity, upwards of one-fourth. But in September, while the belief still continued general that the crop was abundant, bread again rose; and reports were spread that the evils proceeded chiefly from monopolizers combining to enrich themselves by the public distress; and facilitating the efficacy and extent of their conbinations by paper currency. Ever prone to judge and to act from present impulse, without investigation of cause, or reflection on consequence, the multitude easily swallowed these opinions; and many persons thought, by intimidation and force, to reduce the price of bread. In manufacturing towns riots began, especially at Birmingham; thence they reached London. In the night preceding Monday the 15th of September, inflammatory bills were posted on the monument, urging the people to rescue themselves from famine by their own exertions, and to take vengeance on monopolists and forestallers. In the morning a mob appearing in Mark-lane, insulted the corn-dealers, and clamorously demanded the reduction of the price of bread. Mr. Combe, the lord mayor, justly and forcibly represented to the populace that turbulence and violence could only aggravate the evil of which they complained. Being obliged, by their obstinacy, to read the riot act, he at length succeeded in dispersing them without military aid. The riot was afterwards renewed; and though the mob was violent, the chief magistrate, now supported by the volunteers, still hoping to quell them without bloodshed, did not order the associations to fire. For several days there were tumults in different parts of the city; but the ready attendance and firmness of the volunteers

High price of provisions.

Riots in September.

Disturbances in London.

Vigour and activity of the volunteer associations.

The tumults are quelled without bloodshed.

CHAP. LXVIII.

1800. Negotiations for peace with France.

luinteers intimidated the populace, and without actual use of arms repressed the commotions.

While negociations had been carrying on between Austria and France, the British government intimated a desire of being included in a treaty for peace. The chief consul, informed of this intimation, authorised M. Otto, a gentleman who was then employed in England as agent for the exchange of prisoners, to demand an explanation of the British proposals, and to request that a truce should immediately be concluded between the French and British forces by sea and land. The British government declared its readiness to send a plenipotentiary to a congress; but observed that a naval armistice had never been established between France and England during a negociation, nor until the preliminaries had been actually signed; that such a step, giving rise to disputes, might obstruct rather than promote a pacification. M. Otto answered, that the proposal of the chief consul was made in consequence of the offer of Britain to negociate jointly with the emperor. In that view an English armistice would be an equivalent to the French, for the obvious disadvantages from prolonging the truce with Austria. The armistice proposed to England, as a joint negociator with Austria was, that the ships of Great Britain and France should enjoy a freedom of navigation as before the war; that Belleisle, Malta, and Alexandria, should be in a similar predicament with Ulm, Philipsburg, and Ingolstadt; and that accordingly, all French and neutral vessels should be permitted to supply each garrison with provisions and stores; and that the squadrons which formed the blockade of Flushing, Brest, Cadiz, and Toulon, should return into their own harbours, or at least retire from the respective coasts. Lord Grenville, as secretary of foreign affairs, after objecting to the principle of the armistice, as affording an advantage to

France,

France, in the discontinuance of the blockade, without any equivalent to England, proposed a counter-project more equal in principle. This plan prohibited all means of defence from being conveyed into the island of Malta, or any of the ports of Egypt, but allowed the necessaries of life to be introduced from time to time; it provided for the discontinuance of the blockade at Brest[a], Toulon, and other French ports, but tended to prevent all naval or military stores from being conveyed thither by sea; and the ships of war, in those ports, from being removed to any other station. The French government, not satisfied with these propositions, offered this alternative: if Great Britain would agree to a separate negociation, her scheme would be adopted; but, if she should insist on a general negociation, the French project must be accepted. Lord Grenville insisted on the terms that had been already offered by Great Britain. After a fruitless discussion, M. Otto intimated that the joint negociation was at an end; but added, that the first consul was disposed to receive any overtures for a separate treaty with Great Britain: to which proposal the British government, true to their ally, gave a decided negative.

French propositions deemed inadmissible by Britain.

THE last British parliament met on the 10th of November 1800, in order to dispatch the most urgent business previous to the meeting of the united legislature. The subjects which chiefly occupied their attention were, the overtures to a peace with the French republic; the high price of provisions; and the immediate supplies for the national service. The opponents of ministry endeavoured, as in the former year, to charge the scarcity to the account of the war; but ministers still continued to resist this allegation. In considering dearth, the first point was to ascertain whether its cause

Last meeting of the British parliament.

Inquiries concerning the price of corn.

The scarcity is by opposition imputed to the war, which ministers deny.

[a] The substance of this part of the narrative is taken from the State Papers on the negotiation, from September 4th to October 9th.

CHAP. LXVIII.

1800.

was an insufficiency in the crop. Committees of the houses were appointed to investigate facts; and reported that the result of their inquiry was, that the crop was defective about one-fourth. To supply this deficiency, the greater number in both houses proposed the encouragement of importation both of corn and rice, the prevention of export, the use of substitutes in the mixture of quality, and diminution, both by precept and example, of the quantities consumed. Propositions were offered for positive interference, in order to compel the sale of wheat, both in corn and flour, at prices not to exceed a certain sum, which, according to the calculation of the proposers, should allow an equitable benefit to the venders and raisers of these commodities. It was argued, that there were certain prices which sufficiently remunerated the farmer in point of labour, profit, and rent, which might be ascertained in defective as well as abundant crops; and that the present circumstances required a deviation from the usual principles of policy. But it was answered, that compulsory means, employed by the legislature, respecting that species of property, were totally inconsistent with the security of every kind of property; regard to which so peculiarly distinguished the British laws and constitution. Upon what principle could you compel the farmer or corn-merchant to bring that article to market upon less advantageous conditions than other commodities? By diminishing the security of the corn-dealer's property, you impel him to withdraw, and deter others from employing so much capital in that commodity as would be otherwise applied, and lay the foundation for future scarcities. These views being adopted by great majorities in parliament, without interfering in the price, they proposed to remedy the evil by diminishing consumption, and encouraging supply. Acts were passed for enjoining, for a specified time,

Propositions for the interference of the legislature in the price of corn,

rejected with great disapprobation.

Regulations for diminishing consumption, and encouraging importation.

time, the use of mixed and inferior kinds of bread, and for encouraging importation by granting very extraordinary bounties. Recommendations were added to all families and individuals, to be as economical as possible in the use of bread. Distillation of spirits was also suspended, that luxury might not employ grain, so much wanted for necessaries. These were the general objects of the enactments or exhortations of legislature, for meeting the scarcity. CHAP. LXVIII. 1800.

Discussion of the late negociation.

Discussing the negociation, a great majority in parliament approved highly of the resolution of government, not to conclude a separate peace. The opponents of administration predicted that Britain would ultimately be compelled to accede to a separate plan of pacification. The supplies required were voted, the British parliament was prorogued in the end of December, and the united parliament of Great Britain and Ireland met, for the first time, January 22d, 1801.

Supplies.

1801.

State of affairs at the meeting of the united parliament.

Besides the war in which Britain was actually engaged, she was now likely to be exposed to hostilities from a confederacy of the northern powers. The right of a belligerent state to prevent neutral ships from conveying to the opposite party ammunition or stores that may enable him more effectually to carry on the war, is involved in the laws of self-preservation and self-defence. The general principle has been admitted in modern Europe by maritime states, and various treaties have been formed, defining the articles thus to be prohibited. To exercise this right, it was obviously necessary that the nations at war should have a discretionary power of searching ships suspected to be carrying contraband commodities to the enemy. This power had been uniformly admitted, till the American war; when a wish to humble Britain, and the desire of finding for their merchandise a freer vent than was allowed by the existing maritime code,

Disputes with the northern powers.

CHAP. LXVIII.

1801. Public law of Europe relative to belligerent and neutral nations.

of public law, produced the naval confederacy styled the *armed neutrality*, consisting of Holland and the northern powers. During a great part of the present war, Russia, the principal member of that alliance, being inimical to France, had avoided every kind of commerce that could interfere with the efforts of England. Sweden and Denmark had often engaged in contraband traffic, and ships had been seized by the vigilance of the British cruizers, employed to prevent unlawful imports into the harbours of the enemy. Remonstrances and replies had been reciprocally and repeatedly made, and had terminated on the one hand without rupture, and on the other without preventing the continuance either of the northern contraband traffic, or of the British search of ships which traded. In this situation affairs were, when a dispute between a Danish frigate, conveying a fleet of merchantmen, introduced into discussion a new general principle of the maritime law of nations.[b] The Dane had admitted to Britain, as a belligerent power, a right of searching vessels not sailing under convoy, but had asserted that the company of a ship of war protected trading vessels from being liable to examination. The British envoy at Copenhagen stated to the minister of Denmark, the act that had taken place, and the principle alleged in its justification.[c] The Dane admitted his knowledge of the facts, and maintained the principle to be agreeable to public law. The English minister shewed, first, that in point of history and actual convention, no such principle had ever been recognized; secondly, that its admission would amount to a virtual renunciation of the right of search; because the smallest ship of war, by accompanying the largest fleet of merchantmen, might secure the import of

Conduct of the northern powers, Denmark and Sweden.

Dicussion with Denmark.

[b] See State Papers, April 10th, 1800.

[c] See correspondence between the British and Danish ministers, from April 10th to December 31st, 1800, both inclusive. State Papers.

any

any quantity of contraband stores into the harbours of the enemy. The Danish minister continued to support the principle, but without either documents or apposite arguments. He alleged that the belligerent party had, in the honour of the neutral party sufficient security that ships of war should not be employed to guard the conveyance of contraband articles. To rest upon the honur of another state, the maintenance of any right which she could enforce by her own power, little suited the policy or greatness of Britain. Our ambassador firmly, but temperately, stated and repeated the determination of Britain to searchr neutral ships steering towards the enemy's country, by whatever convoy they might be attended. Similar discussions and intimations took place at London between the Danish ambassador and lord Grenville. Britain, averse to hostilities, if they could possibly be avoided, released the Freya, a frigate belonging to Denmark which had been taken in protecting contraband stores, but maintained her right to the support of the principle. Sweden also took a part in the dispute, and maintained the principles of public law asserted by Denmark.[d] Denmark and Sweden, however, could not have ventured to persist in maintaining a naval claim which Britain chose to dipute. But another state now not only joined, but headed the contest. The emperor Paul, in 1799 so eager a co-operator with Austria and Britain, was now become violently hostile to both. Conscious that, in Italy, the brilliant events of that campaign had been principally owing to the Russian host, he saw that the court of Vienna regarded the efforts of the Russians with jealousy, and forebore granting them the praise which they deserved. This disposition, which had before partially appeared, the court of Pe-

CHAP. LXVIII. 1801.

Russia.

Rise and progress of Paul's enmity to Britain.

[d] See State Papers 1800, memorials between Sweden and other courts of Europe, from September 17th, to the end of the year.

tersburgh

CHAP. LXVIII. 1801.

tersburgh readily perceived in the Austrian gazette account of the battle of Novi. The exposure of his armies in Switzerland in the latter end of the campaign, by the departure of the Austrians, he imputed to the same malignant and unwise jealousy, and conceived that the court of Vienna wished the Russians to encounter the chief danger, while the Austrians should reap the glory as well as the benefit. Under these impressions, he had withdrawn his troops from the scene of war. Not without reason offended with the illiberal and hurtful policy of Austria, so very inimical to the great objects of the combination, he had included the other ally in his suspicion and displeasure. The carnage of the Russians in Holland, arising from their own precipitate valour, he imputed to intentional exposure by their British allies: with these causes of disgust, real respecting Austria, and imaginary towards England, many other circumstances were combined to impel a monarch, that had neither sagacity nor patience for separating truth from falsehood, to withdraw from the confederacy. Since his secession, he rapidly became hostile to his former allies: his enmity to England fast growing in his weak and violent mind, was roused into immediate action by the capture of Malta, without being ceded to him as grand master; he was now seized with a desire of giving law to the first naval power in the world by sea, as the former year he had proposed to dictate to the first military power by land. Bonaparte, comprehending the character, and learning the present dispositions of Paul, immediately conceived a design of rendering the mighty power of this weak and capricious monarch an instrument for promoting the schemes of France against England: his genius formed and directed the northern confederacy, that all maritime Europe might join in enmity to the mistress of the ocean. Paul, the puppet of passion and caprice, no sooner declared his

Efforts of Bonaparte to promote the hostile intentions of Paul towards England.

his resolution to renew and extend the armed neutrality, than, contrary to every principle of justice and the law of nations, he laid an embargo upon all the shipping and property of British subjects, though he professed not to be at war with this country. Against such an act of flagrant and lawless injustice, mere diplomatic remonstrance, British ministers knew, could be of little avail: they, therefore, prepared a maritime force, which should teach the weak and capricious tyrant that neither the subjects nor the rights of Britain were to be violated with impunity. While the armament was preparing, however, attempts were made between Britain and the two smaller powers of the north, to adjust their differences amicably; but as they continued to insist upon their claims, and Britain would not renounce her valuable right, which she well knew she had force to maintain, it appeared that force alone must decide the contest. An embargo was laid on the ships of northern powers. Nothing is more evident, than that the commerical exertions of Great Britain, promoting industry and arts of the various countries with which she traffics, and exchanging surplus for supply, benefits respectively and jointly every country within the wide range of her trade: it is therefore the interest of all those countries that her commerce should continue and increase, by which their emolument and gratification continue and increase in the same proportion: her capital, ability, and skill, stimulate their most lucratively productive labours, and enabled them to purchase imported accommodation and luxuries: as the commerce of England is so much connected with her navy, it is advantageous to all other industrious nations, that her maritime greatness should flourish: enmity to the naval power of England in any country that has valuable commodities to export, and wishes with these to purchase necessary or pleasurable imports, is contrary to every principle

Embargo on British shipping.

Lawless acts of Paul.

Interest of all nations to cultivate peace with Britain.

CHAP. LXVIII. 1801.

ciple of sound policy, and must arise from envy, jealousy, or some illiberal or unwise motive, and not from well-digested projects either of accumulation or ambition: yet, not Paul only, the dupe of every whim and caprice, but other monarchs of much more respectable understanding, were persuaded, or impelled from jealousy, to seek hostility, which both indirectly and directly must impair their commercial resources, and diminish their naval power. Denmark and Sweden manifested a determination to co-operate with Paul.

Northern confederacy.

The subject discussed in the united parliament.

THE discussion with the northern powers was one of the principal subjects which occupied the attention of the first session of the united parliament. The question which thence arose, called forth on both sides very ingenious and able investigations of the maritime public laws, which both parties endeavoured to ascertain from natural jurisprudence, and consideration of the end of all laws, the mutual and reciprocal protection and benefit of the parties concerned from general and acknowledged usage, and definitive and specific contract. A great majority of both houses concurred in thinking, that the pretended claims of the states in question violated the law of nations; that it was, therefore, just in England to resist their attempts; and considered the assistance which this illegal traffic might convey to the enemy as so important, as to render it expedient to employ force for its prevention.

IN the month of February, a very unexpected alteration took place in the British cabinet, by the resignation of Mr. Pitt and his principal[e] coadjutors. For this unforeseen change various causes were alleged; a prevalent and popular opinion was, that in the present situation of the country, peace was deemed necessary, and that ministers who had

[e] Except the duke of Portland.

manifested

manifested such hostility against the rulers of France, could not consistently be ostensible counsellors of peace: this, however, was an hypothesis that displayed neither a discriminating nor comprehensive view of the objects and policy of Mr. Pitt. From the commencement of the war, the minister uniformly professed to seek security, and to desire peace whenever it should be attainable with security: he had repeatedly tried negotiation with the French republic, ministers even had made overtures to the chief consul. When Bonaparte, in the beginning of 1800, proffered negotiation, the chief ground of objection was the instability of the new government. In autumn 1800, after the events of the summer had ascertained the firmness of the consular establishment, our cabinet offered to treat, and the negotiation was broken off merely by a difference about terms. Before the close of the year the power of the French rulers, from signal success, acquired additional strength. Britain being left by her continental ally, and likely to be engaged in new hostilities, there were more forcible reasons to incline Mr. Pitt to peace, than at any of the periods when he made overtures for conciliation: recollecting and considering these circumstances, I can see no sufficient reason to justify the theory that Mr. Pitt resigned his office from unwillingness to be the adviser of peace; and his subsequent conduct contradicts, instead of confirming the supposition. Of the other ministers, arguing from their former measures and policy, I can find none that could be fairly inferred to be hostile to conciliation with France, except Mr. Windham, the friend and votary of Mr. Burke. The grounds alleged by ministers themselves for their retreat from their posts, have a much greater share of intrinsic probability, and are supported by various evidences direct and circumstantial.

CHAP. LXVIII. 1801.

In the discussion of union with Ireland, Mr. Pitt and

CHAP. LXVIII. 1801.

and his supporters repeatedly mentioned the satisfaction of the catholics, as more practicable under an extended and united legislation, than a confined and separate; and he either by express stipulations had pledged himself, or by general assurances had impressed many others with a persuasion, that when the union should be effected, he would be the advocate of the catholic claims. I have indeed unquestionable information, that many before adverse, were induced to support the union by a conviction that Mr. Pitt would speedily follow it by a proposition satisfactory to the catholics; that strenuous unionists considered Mr. Pitt as bound to introduce and support such a measure; and little doubt was entertained that a project, which should be proposed by such a minister, would be finally adopted.

But another difficulty arose which proved to be insurmountable: the virtues by which our monarch was distinguished, were not mere effusions of pleasing temper, or even amiable dispositions; his was a benevolence confirmed by moral principle, and conscience, at once expanded and directed by religion: in his relations and conduct to man, he regarded his duty to God; and in contemplating the engagements which he had incurred, he considered the Being on whom he had called as a witness: by his coronation oath, he bound himself to maintain the Protestant religion, established by law: the proposed changes he regarded as inconsistent with that oath, and would agree to no project of policy which was not sanctioned by his conscience. Mr. Pitt, it appears, was so far engaged to support the claims of the catholics, that when unable to execute such an important measure, he deemed it expedient to resign; and this is the most probable and best authenticated account of the motives and causes which terminated one of the most eventful administrations that English history can record.

I trust that the narrative, regarding neither panegyrists

panegyrists nor detractors, but viewing conduct, has not altogether failed in presenting to the reader a just picture of the late ministry; a short parting view shall now therefore suffice. From the time of Cecil, except sir Robert Walpole, none was so long prime minister of England as Mr. Pitt, and without excepting any statesman, none had to encounter such arduous and trying situations. To direct the counsels of a great nation in difficult circumstances, requires chiefly patriotic intention, wise deliberation, and energetic execution; all fortified by a magnanimity which will be deterred by no paltry or ignoble motives from beneficial pursuits, plans, and conduct. That William Pitt possesses transcendant talents, none of his most virulent opponents, who have any talents themselves, will venture to deny; but it is on the exercise of his powers, and the cooperation of his moral qualities, that the ministerial character of the statesman rests. To an understanding which unites extraordinary sagacity, force, and compass, to comprehend the situation of affairs in all their bearings and circumstances, to see what objects ought to be pursued, he unites that combination of invention and discernment which readily discover and estimate apposite means, with an unyielding firmness, that will act according to his own judgment and choice: his mind is in a high degree endowed with self-possession: he is neither to be impelled to speak or to act in any other way than he thinks suitable to the occasion; and perhaps there never was a minister, who, in all the contentions of debate, and the irritation of invective, so completely retained the command of his own powers and passions: neither the poignancy of a Sheridan, nor the strength of a Fox, could move him from the spot on which he resolved to stand. The integrity of William Pitt the second, as of William Pitt the first, was unimpeached. After seventeen years, he retired

CHAP. LXVIII. 1801.

CHAP. LXVIII. 1801.

retired from office with an annuity of scarcely five thousand pounds; an infinitely less provision than his talents might have secured by the exercise of his original profession: but to such a mind, money must be a very secondary object: a passion much more appropriate than avarice to superior minds, is ambition. Mr. Pitt, at a very early age, sought power, and acquired it by the fame of his personal qualities; how he employed it may be best seen from results. When he became minister, he found the country in a very exhausted state, he readily perceived that the extension of commerce, improvement of finance, and promotion of public credit, were objects of the most urgent and immediate concern: justly concluding that peace was much more favourable to trade and revenue than war, he set out as the votary of a pacific policy. During many years of his administration, commerce, finance, and credit were extremely flourishing; his scheme for paying off the national debt was very effectual during the continuance of peace, and diminished the burdens of the war.[f] His principles of foreign policy were those which his ablest predecessors had adopted; that the interposition of Britain in the affairs of the continent is expedient, so far as it tends to preserve the balance of power, for the security of Britain, and the independence of Europe: the application of this principle to Holland, was by all approved: in the case of the Imperial confederacy, the vigour and energy of Pitt repressed, and in a great measure dissolved, a combination that was extremely dangerous to neighbouring states. No part of his policy was more discriminately wise than his conduct in the first years of the French revolution; he carefully avoided not only interposition, but even the expression of an opinion concern-

[f] See accounts presented to the house of commons, of the public funded debt, and the reduction thereof, No. 6. p. 8.

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ing the new system and doctrines, while they did not disturb this country. Even when they became prevalent here, while he adopted the most effectual precautions for preventing their pernicious operation in Britain, he carefully forbore any allusion to their consequences in France: he and his coadjutors observed the strictest neutrality between the internal parties of France, and the contending powers of France and of Germany. In the war, on a fair view of the evidence[s] on both sides, there now remains little doubt that the French were the aggressors; but on the broad question of expediency, the possibility and prudence of avoiding a war, there still exists a great diversity of opinion which must influence the estimate of the administration from that time. On the supposition that war was unavoidable, its conduct becomes the test for appreciating Mr. Pitt's talents, as a war minister; and here we must again refer to the results; where Britain acted in confederacy with other powers, she and they failed in most of the objects which they sought: going to war to defend Holland, and to prevent the aggrandizement of France; we suffered Holland to become a province, and France to acquire a power unprecedented in the annals of modern Europe; but where Britain fought alone, and where the counsels of her ministers, as well as the efforts of her champions, could fully operate, she was uniformly victorious: if, therefore, war was necessary, as far as Mr. Pitt's talents could operate, it was successful; his plans animating the spirit for invigorating the energy, and promoting the resources of the country, were unquestionably efficient. During his belligerent administration, Britain was instigated to efforts which she had never before exhibited. After a contest which reduced the other contending nations to be dependents on France, Britain alone preserved her power

CHAP. LXVIII. 1801.

[s] See chap. I. vol. v.

and

CHAP. LXVIII. 1801.

and importance. One of the most alarming evils with which Mr. Pitt had to contend, was intestine disaffection, arising from the contagion of revolutionary principles: the means which were employed to repress such agitators, were in Britain completely successful, and sedition was restrained before it ripened into treason. In vigorously pursuing an object right within certain bounds, it is extremely difficult not to overstep the limits. The extravagant projects of the corresponding societies required vigilance and counteraction, but it appeared that both ministers and parliament misapprehended the case in supposing such machinations to be treason by the English law: to prohibit the daily utterance of inflammatory lectures, was certainly necessary in the state of the popular mind: but the laws for imposing the restrictions probably outwent the professed purpose. The watchfulness of government respecting Ireland, brought to a premature explosion the rebellion, that might have proved tremendous had it been allowed time to be fully charged: not satisfied with efficacious remedy to existing evil, Mr. Pitt extended his policy to preventives, and endeavoured by union to identify the sentiments as well as the interest of the Irish and British. The union between Britain and Ireland, one of the most momentous measures of Mr. Pitt, even as to present effects, will probably, in future ages, be much more distinguished, when the consequences of British and Irish connection are experimentally ascertained, as are now the consequences of English and Scottish.

Persons who deny the necessity or prudence of the war, may probably little value the abilities which it has called forth, and if they give credit to Mr. Pitt for genius and energy, may deny him wisdom, and assert, that for the last eight years his great powers were employed in remedying evils which he might have before prevented: this, however,

ever, is a mere matter of opinion, that resolves itself into the original expediency of the war, combined with the opportunities of afterwards making peace. It is less the province of the historian to obtrude upon his readers his own judgment, than to furnish to them facts on which to ground theirs: without therefore presuming to solve so very contested a question, I cannot help declaring my thorough conviction, founded on an impartial and accurate view of his whole conduct, that Mr. Pitt, in advising the commencement of the war, and at various stages of its continuance, acted conscientiously, and according to the best of his judgment; and sought the benefit of his king and country, whose affairs he so long administered. Whether unbiassed posterity shall regard the war of 1793 as a necessary or unnecessary measure, peace in 1796 and in 1800 as attainable or not attainable, they must account Mr. Pitt, in the whole series of his administration, a statesman of great ability and strength of mind, who rendered momentous services to his country; and must allow that never was the force of the British character tried by such dangers, or graced by more splendid achievements, than under the administration of William Pitt.

THIS celebrated statesman was supported by able and efficient colleagues; of these the first for practical talents, readiness of useful plan, removal of obstacles, and expeditious dispatch of important business, was Henry Dundas; supreme in devising and executing the most effectual schemes of national defence, and for the improvement of British India. For assiduity, research, information, firmness, and perseverance, Lord Grenville was highly esteemed. Acuteness, ingenuity, and literary ability, with erudition and taste, constitute the principal features in the intellectual character of William Windham; while his prominent moral virtues are honour, justice, sincerity, and benevolence, though not without

CHAP. LXVIII. 1801.

out a tinge of enthusiasm; and probably this loyal and patriotic senator, like his prototype, Burke, was fitter for acquiring eminence by speculative genius, learning, and eloquence, than the arts of a practical statesman. A most respectable member of the late administration, was the earl Spencer, formerly known as a munificent patron and ardent votary of literature and the arts; but by his recent conduct destined to be transmitted to posterity, not only as proprietor of a most valuable collection of erudition, but as the minister who supplied the means for those heroic naval efforts, of which adequate recital will in future ages be the brightest ornament that can adorn a British library; and when some descendant of the present Spencer, in a hereditary reservoir of learning, shall dwell on the splendid exploits which Britain performed in the last years of the eighteenth century, with proud pleasure he may say, My ancestor presided in preparing the fleets with which a Jervis, a Duncan, and a Nelson, conquered.[h]

MR. PITT was succeeded by Mr. Addington, who for many years had held the office of speaker of the house of commons, to the very great satisfaction of the house; lord Grenville by lord Hawkesbury, eldest son to the earl of Liverpool; and the other members by gentlemen or noblemen who had belonged to the party of the late administration, except the earl St. Vincent, who was appointed first lord of the admiralty.

Alarming illness of the king.

IN the end of February, the nation was extremely alarmed by a fit of illness which seized the king, and tended, if possible to manifest more strongly than ever the patriotic and affectionate loyalty of all ranks of his faithful subjects; to demonstrate the tender and anxious love of his queen;

[h] The fleet which obtained the splendid victory of Howe, was prepared under the auspices of lord Chatham.

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the affectionate and dutiful attachment of the royal children; and to place in a most striking light, the filial piety, judgment, prudence, and delicacy of his eldest son and heir apparent. Less decided in nature, and much shorter in duration, than his former malady, the illness of the king did not severely afflict his majesty more than a fortnight; though followed by a languor and lassitude, which gradually giving way to returning vigour, in a few weeks more totally disappeared, and enabled the monarch to resume his executorial and legislative functions. Inquiries were proposed into the expedition to Ferrol and Cadiz, and also concerning the convention of El-Arish, which if observed by England, it was said, might have prevented the necessity of sending troops to Egypt: but all these motions were negatived by the usual very great majorities. The supplies additional to those which were voted before the meeting of the united parliament, included a loan of twenty-five millions, four hundred thousand pounds; the taxes were numerous in detail, embracing various conveniences, and indeed by habit necessaries of life; especially tea and sugar; one of the most severely felt by numerous classes, was the tax upon paper of ten per cent. additional duty. This article was before so extremely dear, from the war enhancing the price of materials, that the impost operating as a prohibition, very much diminished the productiveness of the tax.

Anxious concern of the public.

Inquiries concerning the last campaign.

Supplies.

Loan.

Taxes.

Additional impost on paper;

effects of.

In the first session of the united parliament, a peer of both realms, the humane and generous Moira, at length succeeded in procuring an act for relieving all such insolvent debtors as without fraud had incurred debts not exceeding 1500*l.*, and demonstrated their willingness to do every justice in their power to their creditors, by a complete surrender of their effects. The general principle was to relieve the debtor from a confinement

Liberal and wise bill for the relief of insolvent debtors.

CHAP. LXVIII. 1801.

which could not promote the payment of the creditor; and to surrender to the creditor the debtor's funds; from which only, and not from abridgment of his liberty, the creditor could receive any portion of his demand. Such being the scope of the bill, the clauses and provisions were framed with equal benevolence and discrimination, to relieve misery, without granting impunity to guilt. In the course of the session, various new regulations were made for farther encouraging the importation of wheat, American flour, and rice, to lessen the growing pressure of scarcity. On the 1st of July, the session of parliament terminated.

Farther regulations for encouraging the importation of wheat.

The session rises.

CHAP. LXIX.

The king of Prussia promotes the northern confederacy — short-sighted policy of an attempt to intimidate Britain: — Project of Britain respecting the northern powers — expedition to the Baltic under sir Hyde Parker and lord Nelson — dispositions and force of the northern confederates — our armament arrives in the Cattegate — passes the Sound — Parker resolves to attack the Danes — Nelson offers his services to conduct the attack — battle of Copenhagen — and victory of Nelson — the victorious admiral proposes an armistice — the prince of Denmark agrees — amicable negotiation. — Sweden. — Russia — death of Paul — conduct of Alexander — his negotiation with Britain — amicable adjustment between Britain and the northern powers. — Proceedings of Bonaparte — Germany — Italy — naval campaign — enterprize of sir James Saumarez — threats of an invasion — destruction of the gun-boats. — Egypt — the French still keep possession — Britain resolves to dispossess them — expedition under sir Ralph Abercrombie and lord Keith for that purpose — arrives at Rhodes — proceeds to Egypt — lands at Aboukir — battle and victory — storm the fortress — advance towards Alexandria — Menou projects a night-attack — executes it, March 21st — surrounds the British forces — Bonaparte's invincibles — British 42d regiment — character of that corps — surprised and encompassed — rally — cut their way through triple their number — exploits of other regiments — heroism of the whole army — death of sir Ralph Abercrombie — enemy repulsed with dreadful slaughter — never afterwards venture to face the British troops in the field — general Hutchinson succeeds to the command — operations of — Cairo surrenders to the British arms — capitulation of Alexandria, and the evacuation of Egypt, finally accomplish the purposes of the expedition. — Measures of the new ministry — they are disposed to peace — negotiations — progress of — believed about

to terminate unfavourably — the nation apprehensive of the continuance of war — preliminaries of peace signed — national joy, though general, not universal.

CHAP. LXIX.

1801.

THE king of Prussia earnestly promoted the northern confederacy, in hopes, as it afterwards appeared, of deterring the British government from proceeding with the expedition, and impelling them to liberate the Swedish and Danish ships; and with this view sent an army to Hanover; and the king of Denmark also sent a body of troops to Hamburgh, where there was British mercantile property to a great amount. Short-sighted was the policy which supposed that Britain was to be intimidated by any confederation, from vindicating her rights. Finding the hostile disposition of the northern powers, his majesty resolved on measures at once decisive and pacificatory, somewhat resembling the proposition of Mr. secretary [a] Pitt, forty years before, for enforcing diplomatic ultimatum from the mouths of cannon; our king determined in the present dispute to employ a policy consonant to the combined justice and power of the British nation. This scheme was to send negotiators for peace to Copenhagen, and to second their negotiations by a strong fleet, which should beset the Sound. The armament destined for this service consisted of eighteen ships of the line, four frigates, and a great number of bomb and gun boats; it amounted in all to fifty-two sail, and had on board several regiments of marines, and of riflemen. The command of this equipment was bestowed on sir Hyde Parker: second was the hero of the Nile, who went to seek fresh glory in the Baltic. On the 12th of March, the fleet sailed from Yarmouth roads, and proceeded towards the Cattegate. The northern confederates made dispositions for their reception, with a vigour and

The king of Prussia promotes the northern confederacy.

Short-sighted policy of an attempt to intimidate Britain.

Project of Britain respecting the northern powers.

Expedition to the Baltic, under sir Hyde Parker and lord Nelson.

Dispositions and force of the

[a] See vol. i. p. 250.

precaution

precaution worthy of wiser policy than that which dictated their hostility against the mistress of the ocean. Aware that no naval force was fit to contend with the British, where they had plenty of sea-room, they endeavoured to obstruct our progress, by seizing the straits, and guarding them on both sides with tremendous batteries. The Danish navy consisted of twenty-six ships of the line, with a considerable number of frigates, bomb-ketches, and gun-boats. The Swedes possessed eighteen ships of the line, with a proportionable number of smaller vessels. The Russians had forty-seven sail of the line in the north, neither so well equipped, manned, or officered, as the Danish and Swedish ships. The first force which the British had to meet, was the navy of Denmark.

1801. northern confederates.

THE wind being contrary during part of their voyage, the British armament did not reach the Cattegate till the 25th; and proceeding to the Sound, on the 27th, sir Hyde Parker wrote to the governor of Cronberg castle, which commands the entrance into the straits, desiring to be informed whether he had received orders to fire on the British fleet as it passed into the Sound; and intimating that he would deem the firing of a gun a declaration of war on the part of Denmark. The Danish governor replying, that he was instructed to oppose such an entrance [b], on the 30th they entered the Sound. The admiral, together with the vice-admiral lord Nelson, and rear-admiral Graves, reconnoitred the formidable line of ships, radeaux, pontoons, galleys, fire-ships, and gun-boats, stationed in the road of Copenhagen; they were flanked and supported by batteries on the two islands called the Crowns, the largest of which batteries was mounted with from fifty to seventy pieces of cannon. They

Our armament arrives in the Cattegate;

passes the Sound.

[b] See in London gazette extraordinary of April 15th, copies of four Letters, No. 1, 2, 3, 4. that passed between sir Hyde Parker and Stricker, commander of Cronberg castle; and transmitted by sir Hyde to the admiralty.

were

CHAP. LXIX. 1801.

were again commanded by two ships of 70 guns, and a large frigate, in the inner road of Copenhagen; and two 64 gun ships, without masts, were moored on the flat, on the starboard side of the entrance into the arsenal. The day after, the wind being southerly, the admiral again examined their position, and came to the resolution of attacking the Danes, from the southward. Lord Nelson having offered his service for conducting the attack, after having examined and buoyed the outer channel of the middle ground, proceeded with twelve ships of the line, all the frigates, bombs, fire-ships, and all the small vessels; and on the same evening of the 1st of April, anchored off Draco Point, to make his disposition for the attack, and wait for the wind to the southward. [c] In the morning of the 2d of April, lord Nelson made the signal for the squadron to weigh, and to engage the Danish fleet, consisting of six sail of the line, eleven floating batteries from twenty-six 24-pounders to eighteen 18-pounders, and one bomb-ship, besides schooner gun-vessels. These were supported by the Crown islands, mounting eighty-eight cannon, and four sail of the line moored in the harbour's mouth, and the batteries on the island of Amack. The bomb-ship and schooner gun-vessels made their escape; the other seventeen sail, being the whole of the Danish line to the southward of the Crown islands, after a battle of four hours, were sunk, burnt, or taken. The result of the success was, that the remaining ships of the enemy, and the batteries of Copenhagen, were in the power of Nelson. The narrow passage which was the scene of their efforts, prevented admiral Parker's division from taking a share in the conflict. [d] The damage suf-

Parker resolves to attack the Danes.

Nelson offers his services to conduct the attack.

Battle of Copenhagen,

and victory of Nelson.

[c] See gazette extraordinary, April 15th, 1801.

[d] See London gazette extraordinary for April 15th, the Letter of admiral Parker to the Admiralty, dated on the 6th of that month, off Copenhagen roads.

fered

fered by Nelson's division was very considerable, and three of our ships, the Bellona, Russel, and Agamemnon, were aground, and exposed to the batteries of Crown islands. With his squadron generally victorious, and these ships in imminent danger, the ready genius of Nelson immediately formed a project which should at once give effect to the victory, and extricate the ships from their perilous situation. As soon as the cessation of Danish resistance enabled him to descend to his cabin, he wrote a letter to the prince-royal, representing the expediency of allowing a flag of truce to pass; and stating, that if this were denied, he should be under the necessity of destroying the floating batteries, now in his power, while it would be impossible to save those brave men by whom they were defended. [e] The note was addressed to "the brothers of Englishmen, the Danes." The application of Nelson produced an interview with the prince, the immediate consequence of which was an armistice, which terminated in an amicable convention. The Swedish fleet was detained by contrary winds from joining the Danes; and the successes of the British at Copenhagen, strongly impelled them to unite in conciliation; and an event, the intelligence of which now reached both Denmark and Sweden, determined them to renounce the northern confederacy.

The victorious admiral proposes an armistice.

The prince of Denmark agrees on amicable negotiation.

Sweden.

On the night of the 22d of March, Paul, emperor of Russia, was found dead in his bed. His son and successor, Alexander, no sooner ascended the throne, than he demonstrated his determination to abandon the late projects of his father, and

Russia.—Death of Paul.

[e] I have been informed of a circumstance attending the letter, which admirably displays the self-possession and coolness of our magnanimous hero. When the letter was finished, the secretary, from the urgency of the case, was going to put a wafer in it, to save the time that would have been occupied by sealing-wax. "No (said Nelson) it must be properly and correctly sealed; lest, by the appearance of hurry, we indicate our anxiety, and thereby defeat our purpose."

tread

CHAP. LXIX.

1801.

tread in the steps of his renowned grandmother. One of the first acts of this prince was redress for violated justice; by removing the embargo on British shipping and property, releasing British sailors, and sending them to the several ports from which they had been taken. He immediately dispatched an envoy to Britain, expressing his desire to have every difference amicably terminated; and a negotiation was opened for that purpose, in which Sweden and Denmark were now very willing to be included. Both these powers had received fresh warnings of the impolicy of a contest with Britain: the capture of the valuable islands of Santa Cruz and St. Thomas, with other settlements of smaller note, belonging to Sweden and Denmark, showed that hostilities with Britain were no less destructive to their commerce than to their marine. The negotiation terminated in an amicable convention between Britain and Russia[f], concluded on the 17th of June 1801; to which Denmark[g] acceded on the 23d of October 1801; and Sweden[h] on the 30th of March 1802. By the settlement between Britain and the northern powers, all the contested points were so clearly ascertained, as to preclude any likelihood of future contest: the right of search was accurately defined, and the enumeration of contraband articles was more definite and specific[i] than at any former period. Such were the effects of seconding negotiation by formidable force. After the month of April, there were no actual hostilities; and the British fleet, having effected its purpose, returned to England.

Conduct of Alexander; his negotiation with Britain.

Amicable adjustment between Britain and the northern powers.

Proceedings of Bonaparte.

DISAPPOINTED in his expectations of being seconded by a northern confederacy, the chief consul was engaged in concluding the treaty of Luneville,

[f] See State Papers, June 17. 1801.
[g] October 20th, 1801.
[h] State Papers, March 30th, 1802.
[i] See the respective conventions above quoted.

and

and arranging the internal affairs of Germany with the emperor and king of Prussia; he also settled Italy; prepared to invade Portugal; and attempted to amuse England with feints of invasion, to prevent the British from sending reinforcements to Egypt. After the treaty of Luneville was completed, a diet was held at Ratisbon, wherein the emperor received full powers, in concert with the courts of Berlin and Petersburgh, to adjust the secularizations. In Italy, peace was concluded between the king of Naples and the French republic. The ecclesiastical territories were restored to the Pope. If the emperor had agreed to the first proposals made by the chief consul at Marengo, Tuscany would have been permitted to remain governed by a prince of the house of Austria: but being invaded and conquered by the French troops, it became subject to the disposal of the republic: Bonaparte, erecting it into a kingdom, conferred the government on the youngest branch of the house of Bourbon, under the denomination of the king of Etruria; a title which has probably been dormant ever since the time of Porsenna, who entered into a confederacy for the restoration of monarchy in republican Rome.

CHAP. LXIX. 1801. Germany. Italy.

BRITAIN, finding Portugal menaced with invasion on account of her fidelity, generously released her from engagements, adherence to which must involve her in ruin. She at the same time granted her a subsidy to defend herself until peace could be safely and honourably concluded. Unable to cope with such powerful enemies as Spain, assisted and headed by France, she prudently entered into a negotiation. Various British squadrons, both in the Atlantic and Mediterranean, watched the motions of the French and Spaniards; but taught by the events of former years, the enemy's fleet prudently avoided encountering us in open seas. It was the object therefore of our commanders, to attempt

Naval campaign.

CHAP. LXIX.

1801.

attempt the destruction of their force in harbour or near the shore. A very signal exploit of this sort was performed by sir James Saumarez: finding some French ships at anchor near Algeziras, he attacked them; but the wind rising very strong from the sea, and the water being very shallow in that part of the bay, the Hannibal ran aground, and was taken. The British commander in these circumstances found it necessary for the present to desist. A few days after he attacked the Spanish ships, sent from Cadiz to convoy the prize from Algeziras: he took a seventy-four gun ship, and set fire to two first-rates, which were consumed, and near two thousand four hundred men perished. The French continued to menace an invasion; and were reported to have assembled great numbers of gun-boats on their north coast. Lord Nelson undertook an expedition to Dunkirk and Boulogne, where the greatest number were understood to be collected. In this undertaking, though he incurred considerable loss, yet he was on the whole successful.

Enterprise of sir James Saumarez.

Threats of an invasion.

Destruction of the gun-boats.

THE splendid successes of the British arms during this war had hitherto arisen principally from her navy. Her soldiers indeed had fought with as much valour and skill as at the most brilliant periods of her military history; and in the campaigns of 1793, 1794, and 1799, efforts of heroism had been exhibited, which fully equalled the glorious æras of Blenheim, Ramilies, and Quebec; but the event was very different. In the recent war, our champions were encumbered, not assisted by allies; where we acted alone, we were victorious: in concert we were not vanquished, but were compelled to relinquish our objects. The history now comes to exploits and achievements of the British army, which have never been surpassed in the annals of war.

Egypt.

THE death of Kleber, and the succession of Menou

Menou to the command, prevented the evacuation of Egypt. The French general resolved to violate the treaty, which had been concluded by his predecessor, and actually kept possession of the country, which it had been stipulated to abandon. Justifiable reasons for transgression of compact are not to be found; but the motives for a deviation from good faith were easily discovered. Egypt was well known to be a favourite object with Bonaparte, and that he attached much more importance to it than the directorial government. Kleber had concluded the convention of El-Arish before intelligence had arrived that Bonaparte was supreme magistrate, with uncontrolled power; and was no sooner informed of the elevation of the general, than he began to make dispositions for retaining possession of Egypt. The misunderstanding with the British government respecting the capitulation, allowed him a pretext for repossessing strong holds. The British ministers, agreeably to the good faith of the nation, ratified the treaty as soon as they were assured that it had been actually concluded. The negotiation had been renewed, as we have seen, but the assassination of Kleber intervened before any decisive measure was effected. Besides the views of Bonaparte, the wishes of Menou himself were eager for retaining Egypt: he had declared himself a Mussulman, married an Egyptian lady, was desirous of erecting Egypt into a colony, and extremely hostile to all who proposed to return to France. Some asserted, that he even intended to render Egypt an independent principality of which he himself might be the head. This opinion is not very probable; because, without the protection of France, he could have no reasonable hopes of being able to maintain his ground; and there are no proofs that he ever had such an object in contemplation. But whatever might be his purpose in keeping possession of Egypt, it was an end

CHAP. LXIX. 1801.

The French still keep possession.

Britain resolves to dispossess them.

CHAP. LXIX.

1801.

end of the first importance to the British government, to drive the French enemy from a settlement which was in itself advantageous and productive; and might pave the way for enabling them to annoy British India. To achieve such a momentous purpose, was the ultimate object of the expedition, in which sir Ralph Abercrombie commanded the army, and lord Keith the fleet. After our armament had withdrawn from Cadiz, in October 1800, they entered the Mediterranean, and during some time anchored in the bay of Tetuan. On the 3d of November, part of the fleet sailed for Minorca, and the remainder with sir Ralph Abercrombie, to Malta, where it arrived on the 30th, and was joined by lord Keith, with the other division, on the 14th of December. At Malta, the troops disembarked, while the ships were cleaning: the abundance of fresh provisions, the comforts of the beautiful city of la Valette, and the luxuriancy of the scenery, soon re-animated the troops, and rendered them completely fit for service. On the 20th and 21st, the first and second division sailed from Malta, and instead of proceeding directly to Egypt, bent their course to Asia Minor, and anchored in Marmorice bay, between the continent and the island of Rhodes. The object of this diagonal movement was to be assured of the military co-operation of the Turks, and also their assistance in furnishing horses, gun-boats, and other necessary articles[k]: here also they procured suplies of fresh provisions. During the month of January, and a considerable part of February, the expedition continued in this station, and every endeavour was employed to learn the nature and local circumstances of the country, the force and disposition of the enemy. On the first subject, the only officer that could give them any information was sir Sid-

Expedition of sir Ralph Abercrombie and lord Keith, for that purpose.

Arrive at Marmorice.

[k] Sir Robert Wilson, p. 3.

ney

ney Smith; the coasts that commander had seen, surveyed with his usual accuracy, and comprehended with his usual ability; but to the interior parts of the country his knowledge did not extend. Captain Boyle, who had been wrecked off Damietta, and, contrary to the usages of war, was made a prisoner, had omitted no opportunity of learning the number, condition, and situation of the French army; but it appears the intelligence actually received by the British commanders, from such confined sources, was extremely imperfect, and the power of the enemy was much greater than they had any reason to apprehend. The French force which now possessed Egypt, it was afterwards found, amounted to thirty thousand, besides natives, who were reckoned about fifteen thousand more. The Gallic troops were habituated to the country, elated with success, inured to danger, aware of the importance of Egypt to their government, determined to defend the possession of it, and encouraged in this determination, no less by the assurance of speedily receiving effectual succours, than by the promise of reward, and the love of glory. The English army that was to dispossess this formidable force, amounted to fifteen thousand, of whom from sickness only twelve thousand were effective; and thus twelve thousand troops, totally unacquainted with the country, and unused to the climate, were to attack what thirty thousand of the best troops of the continent of Europe, thoroughly conversant in all the local advantages, and familiarized to the climate, were to defend. Such was the relative state of the parties: let us now follow them to their conduct in that state.

Proceed to Egypt.

On the 23d of February, the fleet weighed anchor; the number of vessels of every kind amounted to about a hundred and seventy-five sail; and, says the historian of the expedition, "a nobler sight could not be beheld. The greatness of the armament,

CHAP. LXIX. 1801.

mament, the gaiety of the brave men on board, exciting reflections on the awful destiny of the expedition, not only as relating to those immediately acting in it, but as affecting the dearest interests of Great Britain, afforded a scene for contemplation, in the highest degree gratifying and [1] impressive." The armament steered a southern course: on the 1st of March the leading frigate discovered land, which proved to be the coast near Arabs Tower; and on the next morning the whole fleet moored in Aboukir bay, and the men of war occupied the very ground on which had been fought the battle of Nelson.

Attempt to land at Aboukir.

THE coast from Aboukir bay round to the Nile presented an appearance at once picturesque, striking, and formidable. The sea full of shoals rendered disembarkation extremely difficult, and even dangerous, though it should not be interrupted by an enemy. The shore and the adjacent country were covered with sand-hills; among these the French were disposed in very great numbers and force, with batteries in front; towards the Nile to the left extremity of the British; and on our right along the promontory of Aboukir. The batteries and sand-hills afforded to the artillery and musketry such positions as could dreadfully annoy our troops in their attempt to land, and be secure themselves: while they fired on our soldiers, our ships could not return the fire, because thereby they must bear upon their friends more than upon their foes. Tremendous as were these obstacles to landing, they served only to rouse the energy of British heroism: but for some days the extreme roughness of the surf prevented an attempt to disembark. On the 8th of March, the weather being less boisterous, it was resolved on that day to effect a landing. Early in the morning, the first division of the army, consisting of the reserve under the

[1] Sir Robert Wilson, p. 7.

orders

orders of major-general Moore; the brigade of guards under major-general Ludlow; and part of the 1st brigade, composed of the royals, 1st battalion of the 54th, and two hundred of the 2d battalion; the whole amounting to about five thousand five hundred men, under the command of major-general Coote, assembled in the boats; the remainder of the 1st and 2d brigade being put into ships close to the shore, that a support might be quickly given after the first landing was effected.[m] At nine o'clock the signal was made for the boats to advance, and the troops proceeded towards the shore. The French, posted among the sand-hills, and forming the concave arch of a circle, looked with wonder at the preparation; and, as they afterwards confessed, did not believe such an adventurous attempt could be made: but when they saw the boats moving with extraordinary rapidity, they were convinced that the British were in earnest, and they immediately poured from the heights, and Aboukir castle, all the shot and grape-shot that their musketry and artillery could issue: the effect was tremendous; in a situation in which they could not return the fire, and seeing their comrades fall about them, under these fell messengers of multiplied death, instead of being dismayed, our heroic soldiers were the more indignantly eager to reach the shore, where, bringing arm to arm of Briton against Frenchman, they knew they would soon avenge their fellow-countrymen. The boats arrived at the destined point: springing on land, in the face of cannon, our champions formed on the beach, and advanced in a line, which, in the deep sands, piles of sand-hills, and in the face of the enemy, was as well observed as if they had beenexercising on a parade.[n] Marching coolly and steadily

Battle and victory.

[m] General Abercrombie's Letter dated *March 16th, 1801*, in the London Gazette of May 9th; sir Robert Wilson, page 12.

[n] Lieutenant-colonel James Stewart, of the 42d regiment, told me he had never

CHAP. LXIX. 1801.

steadily up to the foes, they were enabled to use the surest instrument of victory to British courage supported by British muscular strength — the bayonet. And now the artillery from our ships could operate against the batteries of Aboukir, without exposing our soldiers to danger. The French made a stand worthy of their national heroism: but when British sailors can use their cannon, and British soldiers their bayonets, the most valiant Frenchmen are destined to yield. In the conflict between such combatants, the battle was obstinate and bloody: but our heroes prevailed. The French found they had more formidable foes to encounter than even those whom they had met at Lodi and Arcola; and that a British handful at Acre had merely given a specimen of what they might expect from a British army.

The country in which this astonishing landing was effected, is an oblong peninsula; having on the east a branch of the Nile; on the north the ocean; on the south the canal of Alexandria, called by the French, Lake Maadie; and on the west, situated on the isthmus, the city of Alexandria. The peninsula was from two to three miles in width, from the sea to the canal: from the vanguard of the army, now facing the west, to Alexandria, the space was about sixteen miles, but full of ruins, and other posts of very strong defence. On the right was the sea, with the British fleet at anchor in the bay; behind was the Nile; on the left the canal; and in front sand-hills, terminated by the metropolis, flanked by its sublimely towering Pharos.

On the 9th of March the army advanced to the westward, leaving two regiments to blockade

never seen the ranks more exactly dressed, or a better and more harmonious line on a review day, than was here formed and maintained in the face of so many obstacles and dangers. That gentleman himself, with Colonel Dickson, the first lieutenant-colonel, were wounded in this engagement.

Aboukir,

Aboukir, which refused to surrender. The 10th and 11th were employed in reconnoitring the enemy, bringing stores from the ships, and forming hospitals and depots. On the 12th some partial skirmishes took place, but with no material consequences. The French army was posted on a ridge of heights, about four miles from Alexandria; the British resolved to attack them in this position: and on the 13th commenced the assault, by the left of our army, hoping to turn the right flank of their antagonists. The enemy made a very vigorous resistance, and by their cavalry and artillery cut off a great number of our men, and prevented us from attacking them in flank; but the British, forming in two lines, made such a charge in the front, as compelled them to retire to the heights, before Alexandria. Ardent to pursue their victory, the gallant British pushed on to force the strong position of the enemy; but the French artillery played with such tremendous effect, that it was found prudent to desist; and the loss of our troops in this arduous enterprise was very considerable. The detachment that was employed in the siege of Aboukir proceeded in its operations, and on the 17th day that fortress surrendered. The army was meanwhile employed in getting their heavy cannon on shore, and procuring supplies of water and provisions. Menou was now arrived from Cairo, and the whole force of the French was concentrated at Alexandria. By his memorable defence of Acre, Sir Sidney Smith had obtained very great influence among the Arabs, who communicated to him every information which they deemed important. On the evening of the 20th, an Arab chief sent a letter to this commander, acquainting him that general Menou was arrived, and intended the next morning to attack the British camp. Sir Sidney believed the intelligence [o]: the com-

Battle of the 13th of March.

Menou projects a night attack.

[o] Sir Robert Wilson, p. 29.

CHAP. LXIX. 1801.

manders did not think it probable that such an attempt would be made: but the information proved authentic.

THE British army, at this time, was encamped across the peninsula, about four miles from Alexandria; the right consisted of various regiments, in front of which, on the extremity, was the 28th; in a redoubt the 42d, to the left, a little more advanced [P], with Stewart's foreign regiment on the left in front; immediately behind the 28th, the 23d, and 58th, and about five other regiments farther back. Such was the plan of our right division; between which and the left there intervened a considerable space. Between the right of the British and the beach there was a narrow tract of ground; in day-light covered by the British frigates and gun-boats that were nearest the shore, but at night without such a collateral defence. Menou proposed to turn the right flank of our right division on the one hand, and attack the left flank of the same division on the other, so as to surround that part of the army, and cut it off from the support of the left: to facilitate the intended assault on the right, the French made a feint on the other division. At half past three in the morning, some musketry was heard on the extremity of the left; and when anxious attention was turned to that quarter, loud shouts were heard on the right: a roar of musketry succeeded, and the action became general. The enemy had turned our right flank, and the 28th, from its position, bore the first brunt of the battle, and maintained their ground against unequal numbers with the intrepid heroism of British soldiers. The 58th and 23d, which were behind the 28th, with equal intrepidity, marched to its assistance, but the numbers of the French were extremely great. Colonel Alexander

Battle of the 21st.

[P] See Sir Robert Wilson's Plan of the Battle of the 21st.

Stewart

CHAP. LXIX. 1801.

Stewart marched the 42d to support their fellow soldiers, and became engaged with a corps, styled, by the French, INVINCIBLES (and till that morning they had deserved the name); THE HIGHLANDERS COMPLETELY VANQUISHED THE INVINCIBLES, and took their standard; but while pursuing their victory, a body of cavalry coming round, charged them in the rear, while a fresh column marched up to them in front. In this double danger, [q] Stewart made every disposition that the exigency could admit; and the highlanders at the same time fought in front, flank, and rear. The company of major Robert Bisset was first engaged with the French cavalry; and, after a most intrepid resistance, their commander being first wounded with a pistol, and afterwards mortally with a sabre, a great part of the company was cut to pieces; and, combatting quadruple their number, the whole corps performed the most splendid efforts of prowess worthy of their heroic character so long earned and uniformly maintained; but they were oppressed by numbers, and in very imminent dangers: yet, though broken, the gallant band was not defeated: individually its heroes resisted, and the conduct of each man exalted the renown of the regiment.[r] — But why, in recounting the extraordinary feats of British heroism, should we dwell on the achievements of one part: fighting for their king and country, every column, Lowland, English, and Irish, had the hearts and hands of Royal Highlanders. Nor were the efforts of the army, at this critical juncture, confined to the native subjects of his majesty; foreign troops

British 42d regiment.

Bonaparte's Invincibles.

Surprised and encompassed.

Heroism of the whole army.

[q] Alexander Stewart, first major of the regiment, and then commander; Dickson, and James Stewart, the two lieutenant-colonels, having been wounded on the 8th. Alexander Stewart, though but little turned of forty, has been twenty-eight years an officer in that regiment: he is the eldest son of a very respectable gentleman, Robert Stewart, Esq. of Clochfollidgh, in the county of Perth. James, his younger brother, was on this expedition, captain of lord Keith's ship.

[r] Sir Robert Wilson, p. 32.

CHAP. LXIX. 1801.

displayed equal valour, and gave an important turn to the contest. The 42d and 28th were almost overpowered, when general Stuart, with the foreign brigade, consisting of three regiments, advanced to their assistance, and poured in such a heavy and well-directed fire, that nothing could withstand it: the enemy fled in confusion. Though the battle was hottest in the front division of the right wing, yet the attack of the enemy extended to the rear, and part of the left was engaged: but the valour of our troops was every where proportionate to the dangers by which it was assailed. Next to the regiments that have been already mentioned, the 40th, 44th, 30th, and Queen's, appear to have been chiefly exposed in the battle. Soon after day-break, the French were repulsed on every side. A fresh column attempted to turn the right flank of the guards, who were in the right extremity of the left wing, but the steady and vigorous fire of those troops soon compelled the enemy to fly, and the repulse was complete.

Enemy repulsed with great slaughter.

DURING the charge of cavalry, the veteran hero, Sir Ralph Abercrombie, received his mortal wound. On the first alarm he had hastened to the scene of combat; and having dispatched his aides-du-camp with orders to the different brigades, he was alone when some French dragoons attacked him, threw him from his horse, and attempted to cut him down with a sword; the gallant old man sprang up to defend himself, and wrested the sword from his antagonist, who was immediately bayonetted by a soldier of the 42d: but our general himself had received wounds, which at the time he little regarded, and he kept the field, giving his orders with his usual coolness and intrepidity. When the flight of the enemy rendered exertion no longer necessary, his spirit yielded to nature, he became faint, and was placed in a hammock. Hailed on

1801.

every side by the blessings of his soldiers, he was carried to a boat, and conveyed on board lord Keith's ship; and after languishing for several days, died on the 28th.

Death of Sir Ralph Abercrombie.

SIR RALPH ABERCROMBIE was one of the most distinguished generals in the British service. His commands were important, and uniformly successful; the means which he employed were indeed the most efficacious for insuring victory. To his officers and soldiers he united every practicable and useful indulgence, with the strictest discipline and the most rigid exaction of professional duty. He was beloved and revered by the army, and they went on with the assurance of victory when he was at their head. In private life, he was as amiable and estimable as in public meritorious and admirable. To his family[s], friends, and connections, of every rank and degree, he was endeared by the habitual practice of all the relative and social duties, the agreeableness of his manners, the warmth and tenderness of his affections, the honour and integrity of his conduct: but to use the words of an illustrious judge[t]; "it is some consolation to those who tenderly loved him, that, as his life was honourable, so was his death glorious: his memory will be recorded in the annals of his country, will be sacred to every British soldier, and embalmed in the recollection of a grateful posterity." Of officers of rank, major-general Moore was wounded in the head, but not dangerously; brigadier-general Oakes was dangerously wounded; colonel Pa-

[s] Sir Ralph Abercrombie was the representative of the very ancient and respectable family of Tulibodie, in the county of Clackmannan; he married Miss Menzies, of the family of Castle Menzies, and cousin-german to Sir Robert Menzies, head of that name and house. As a testimony of his majesty's regard his widow has been created a baroness, the honours to descend to their son and heir.

[t] See general Hutchinson's letter to Mr. Dundas, dated the 5th of April 1801, and inserted in the Gazette Extraordinary of the 15th of May.

get,

CHAP. LXIX. 1801.

get, of the heroic 28th, was wounded at the first onset, but less severely than general Moore. The field-officers killed were lieutenant-colonel David Ogilvy [u], of the 44th; lieutenant-colonel Peter Dutens [x], of one of the foreign regiments; and major Robert Bisset. [y] The other officers killed and wounded were not numerous, but in their respective ranks also merited and earned high commendation.

Invincible standard.

As every circumstance belonging to this momentous and glorious day must be interesting to readers, it may not be deemed improper to say a few words on a subject which has greatly engaged the public attention: the capture, loss, and re-capture, of the invincible standard. Of the various statements that have been presented concerning this trophy, the following, admitted by Sir Robert Wilson, is in itself the most probable, reconciles different testimonies, and shows that evidence which has been represented as contrary, is merely a variety of parts which easily harmonizes into one whole.

MAJOR STIRLING, of the 42d, took the standard [z], just as they had marched to the relief of the 28th, delivered it to serjeant Sinclair, and directed him to retire to the rear. By the surrounding cavalry, Sinclair was wounded, and lost the standard [a]: here

[u] An officer of very high character, whom I knew from a boy; he was my class-fellow at St. Andrew's college, with captain Charles Campbell, who twenty-two years before (as I mentioned in the account of the campaign 1779), fell in an earlier stage of the same honourable course. Colonel Ogilvy was the son of the late Sir John Ogilvy, head of a very ancient and honourable family in the county of Angus, and brother to the present Sir Walter.

[x] Dutens was in high estimation for enterprise, and adventurous boldness and generosity, and was a distinguished favourite with the officers and soldiers.

[y] Of my friend and relation, major Bisset, his brother officers and soldiers of the 42d best attest the merits by their esteem and regret.

[z] See narrative (by authority) of the movements of the 42d, on the 21st of March, and signed A. Stewart, major and lieutenant-colonel of the 42d R. H. regiment; and James Stirling, major and lieutenant-colonel of the 42d R. H. regiment.

[a] Sinclair himself, in his declaration before the Highland Society, testified, that from his wound he fell into a swoon; and before he recovered, the standard was gone.

ends

ends the evidence of the capture and loss. Anthony Lutz, a private of the Minorca regiment, brought the standard to the head-quarters; and, in addition to the fact of his having it in his possession, adduced two witnesses to prove that he had taken it from the French: and such is the testimony of the re-capture. The result of the whole evidence is, that major Stirling took the standard, and delivered it to Sinclair; who being wounded, and in a state of insensibility, lost the same; and that it was retaken by Anthony Lutz. Taking no part in the dispute, the historian has only to express his wish, that future narrators of British wars may ever have to celebrate such valour as was exhibited by the 42d and foreign regiments, the captors and re-captors of a standard that was termed *invincible*, till it was borne against the troops of Britain.

General Hutchinson succeeds to the command.

On the death of general Abercrombie, Hutchinson succeeded to the supreme command, under circumstances the most trying and difficult. The victories of the 8th, 13th, and 21st, must naturally impress many with an idea, that French Egypt was subdued, and that nothing remained but to take possession of the conquest: such is the opinion all those would form, who regard fighting as the only arduous service of a soldier. The British had impaired the force of the enemy, but still they were much more numerous than the invading army; and our troops had to contend against foes, which military heroism often encounter in vain: they had to penetrate an unknown country; to traverse trackless deserts; to wade through burning sands, exposed to the rays of the scorching sun, fast approaching to vertical heat; they had to meet with difficulties unessayed in the history of British warfare,—difficulties so numerous and complicated, as to exceed any that had been experienced among the mountains of Hindostan, or the woods of St. Domingo: to undergo such hardships

Great difficulties that still remained in the enterprize.

CHAP. LXIX. 1801.

hardships required not only British prowess, but magnanimity, and the moral energy of professional duty. To animate and invigorate these principles, was the first and grand object of the new general.

Plan of operations.

To attack Alexandria was at present impracticable; since it was so strongly fortified that the exertions must reduce his army; and even success in that enterprise tend ultimately to defeat the object of the expedition. Hutchinson, therefore, resolved to penetrate into the country, reduce Lower Egypt, and make his way to Cairo; thence that Alexandria would be insulated, and if not taken by storm, compelled to capitulate. Completely to debar the French army from communications with the interior country, he cut the canal of Alexandria, to let the sea into the lake Mareotis, and thus render the capital an island. Having effected this change, Hutchinson proceeded in his plan of reducing Lower Egypt; and while lord Keith commanded the coast to intercept communications between France and her troops, Sir Sidney Smith headed a squadron of gun-boats that sailed up the Nile to co-operate with the army.

In exhibiting pursuits requiring patience, constancy, and fortitude, more frequently than active prowess, there is less room for minute description of operation than general exhibition of object, conduct, progress, and result. In proposing to reduce Egypt, on both sides of the Nile up to Cairo, one purpose of Hutchinson was, to facilitate the way for a junction of troops from India, that were expected soon to reach Suez, so that not only advances were necessary for the general objects of the expedition, but such advances as would secure the route of the expected reinforcements: it was requisite, therefore, to obtain a footing in the east as well as the west of Egypt, and with this view our general proceeded. By the 19th of April, forts Julien and Rosetta, on the left bank of the river,

river, were captured; and being now joined by a considerable number of Turks, they proceeded up the banks to Rhamanich, which was at once a magazine of provisions to the enemy, and commanded the entrance into the Delta: here the French made a stand, but were vanquished, and retreated towards Cairo; and the British troops took possession of the town. This was a very important stage in our progress, since we thereby cut off the communication between Menou in Alexandria, and Belliard the French general in Upper Egypt; commanded the Delta, and had the means of intercepting the convoys of provisions for the enemy. On the 11th of May, the army continued its march up the river, in a fine country. Accustomed to Mahomedan and French depredators, the people regarded the new comers at first with dread, but afterwards with wonder, when they found that not a single soldier of the British committed the slightest pillage [b]; and at last with gratitude hailed them as their deliverers from a plundering banditti. The only gratuitous contribution which our champions required was water: this beverage with gladdened eagerness the natives brought; and readily supplied with every provision in their power heroes, who, in the midst of war and scanty stores, strictly observed the principles of justice, and showed that British troops are soldiers, not robbers. On the 15th of May, intelligence was received that Belliard was in full march from Cairo towards the British army: Hutchinson resolved to anticipate the expected attack. On the 16th the Turks commenced the onset, the French took post in a wood of date trees which they maintained for three hours, but at length were compelled to [c] retreat.

CHAP. LXIX. 1801.

[b] See Sir Robert Wilson, p. 99. Every officer with whom I have conversed agrees in this account, so singularly honourable to British soldiers.

[c] See in London Gazette Extraordinary, letter of major Holloway, dated the 20th of May.

These

CHAP. LXIX. 1801.

These successes encouraged great numbers of Arabs to join the British army, and while they were making such progress on the left bank of the Nile, they also made advances in the Delta, and took a very valuable convoy on the canal of Menouf[d], which joins the Rosetta to the Damietta branch of the river. Being secure on both sides, our army advanced up the bank, but were obliged to traverse deserts that came down to the very edge of the Nile; and at the summer solstice, under a vertical sun, our soldiers were digging their way through the burning sands of Africa; but their constancy and resolution, in encountering the soil and climate, were equal to their heroic courage, in forcing the sabres and cannon of hostile men. At length they crossed the wilderness, the pyramids of Egypt presented themselves to their astonished view, and the difficulties of nature which they had just surmounted, were absorbed in their wonder at the stupendous monuments of art which they beheld. At Gizeh the camp was placed, and dispositions were made for investing Cairo from both sides of the Nile; but the French garrison, conscious of their inability to withstand the efforts of the British, offered to capitulate. A convention[e] was accordingly concluded on the 27th of June, by which it was agreed that the French were to be conveyed to their ports in the Mediterranean, with their arms, artillery, baggage, and effects, within fifty days from the date of the ratification; men of letters and naturalists were permitted to retain their papers and collections; an exoneration was granted to such of the people as had adhered to the cause of France; and it was stipulated, that Menou might avail himself of these conditions, for the surrender of Alexandria, provided his acceptance of them were notified to the general com-

Surrender of Cairo.

[d] See in London Gazette Extraordinary, letter of general Hutchinson to lord Hobart, dated June 1st.

[e] State Papers, June 27th, 1802.

manding

manding before that city, within ten days of the date of the communication being made. And thus the efforts of our commander and army, surmounting very arduous obstacles, effected a momentous part of their purpose; and it depended upon Menou, whether the whole was not compassed by the convention of Cairo. A few days after this treaty, the army from India arrived on the banks of the Nile, and it was extremely mortifying to our brave troops from the East, that, after tasting so deeply of the toils and hardships of war, fortune did not permit them to participate on this occasion in its glories.

MENOU was far from approving of the article in the capitulation of Cairo, by which he might have been included in the convention. He had long expected a reinforcement, which was under the convoy of admiral Gantheaume, and that commander had spared no diligence to reach Alexandria; but the vigilance and ability[f] of lord Keith rendered his approach impracticable: after having advanced within thirty leagues of the coast, being descried by the English fleet, he departed with all possible expedition; so that Menou had only the garrison with which in April he had been inclosed in Alexandria.

MEANWHILE the British forces were at Cairo, and had time to survey the famed capital of Saracenic Egypt, which was found to be totally different from what it had been reported by travellers, and

[f] Naval heroism and ability appears to be hereditary in the family of Elphinstone. Captain Charles Elphinstone Fleming, son to lord Elphinstone, the elder brother of lord Keith, though several years under thirty, distinguished himself throughout the war; but especially in 1797, in the West Indies, where, commanding a frigate, he cut out several Spanish ships from a harbour, under the cover of batteries, and in the face of frigates. Captain Charles Elphinstone, son to William, India director, second brother of lord Keith, several years younger than his cousin, has also acquired high reputation; and captain Charles Adam, (son to a sister of lord Keith, and to Mr. Adam, whom this history has repeatedly mentioned,) only twenty-three years of age, in the Sybil frigate, at the close of the war, captured the French Chipone, of much superior force, and terminated hostilities by an achievement as brilliant as any performed by a single ship during the arduous contest.

very

CHAP. LXIX. 1801.

very unlike the magnificence which has so often delighted the reader of the Arabian Nights' Entertainments.[g] The manners and customs of the people, however, were found to be much more similar, and it is not difficult to account for either the diversity or resemblance. The vicissitudes of war, and political revolutions, may dissipate or transform cities; but the Mahomedan character and manners are stationary and uniform: topographical and statistical reports of Egypt, however, come not within the plan of the history.

INFORMED that Menou would not accede to the capitulation, Hutchinson prepared to proceed against Alexandria. The French were sent, under the escort of general Moore, to Rosetta; and as quickly as possible embarked for Europe. In the beginning of August, Hutchinson, being now on the coast, made dispositions for besieging Alexandria. On the 15th, he invested that city, on the eastern and western front; while lord Keith[h] co-operated from the north with his fleet, and on the south with the gun-boats that were assembled in lake Mareotis: Alexandria was thus completely surrounded. On the 21st, the British fleet forced its way into the great harbour. On the 22d, general Coote, who commanded the western detachment, protected by the gun-boats in the Mareotis on the right, and by light vessels belonging to the fleet on the left, moved forward near the walls of the town. On the east, so recently the scene of British heroism, Hutchinson with the main army pressed.[i] By the 26th, Menou, finding resistance totally hopeless,

Capture of Alexandria and expul-

[g] Sir Robert Wilson informs us, that Mr. Hammer procured in Cairo a complete edition of the Arabian Nights' Entertainments, in Arabic manuscript, containing many more stories than have as yet been published, and which he means to translate; see p. 154.

[h] See letter of lord Keith, dated the 27th of August, and inserted in the London Gazette of the 17th of November; and Sir Robert Wilson, from p. 187. to 206.

[i] Sir Robert Wilson, p. 187.

offered

offered to capitulate; and received the same terms which had been granted to Belliard at Cairo. Such was the issue of Bonaparte's expedition to Egypt: there, as in all their undertakings during the last war, the French prospered, until they encountered the forces of Britain: there Bonaparte learned, that in vain he might project schemes of maritime and commercial conquest, when opposed by the naval and military heroes of Britain. All the mighty preparations and boasted achievements of four years in pursuit of the favourite object of the chief consul, perished without leaving a wreck behind. The whole, and every part of this expedition, displayed the British character in its manifold excellencies. Adventurous courage guided by wisdom, united with patience and magnanimous constancy, and were all inspired by patriotism and loyalty, and enhanced by justice. Such were the qualities that rendered Britain triumphant in the signally glorious campaign of Egypt, in such Britain may always confide, and such let her enemies dread. If *ambitious pride* should overlook more remote events, when she seeks war with Britain, let her REMEMBER EGYPT.

1801. Expulsion of the French from Egypt.

THE new ministers of England, following the example of their predecessors, uniformly declared themselves desirous of peace, whenever it should be attainable with security, and a negotiation was opened with M. Otto. The chief difficulty arose from Egypt, which Bonaparte was resolved if possible to retain; and the British government was determined to dispossess the French of a settlement which would prove so injurious to the interests of England. That difficulty however lessened, as intelligence was received of the progress of our

Termination of the war.

CHAP. LXIX. 1801.

arms. Both parties wisely observed the strictest secrecy concerning the overtures, the advances, and the obstacles: the hopes of the people of Britain and France had been extremely sanguine in summer, but in autumn they began to fear that the reciprocal discussions were not likely to terminate in pacification. Various circumstances convinced the public that the crisis was fast approaching, and it was generally suspected that a few days would announce the continuance of war. With such anticipations September closed; and never were hopes of immediate peace more distant throughout London, than during the greater part of the 1st of October. Such were the opinions that prevailed, when the next day opened with intelligence, that peace was concluded between Great Britain and the French republic. The tidings spread through the country a joy that was natural and just, on the supposition that the peace would be secure and permanent; and that supposition was founded in an idea that the chief consul of France would regard the real interest and welfare of the people, and would not provoke dismission from his office, by rendering it the instrument of national misery. The reasoning was fair; the hopes of durable tranquillity were founded on probable grounds, and the rejoicings were general.[k] They were not however universal, as from the situation and character of the chief consul, a small number augured inveterate hostility to Britain.

THE objects which the former ministers had professed to seek by war, and in the successive negotiations, were, the security of Britain, restitution to her allies, and the independence of Europe.

[k] I must acknowledge that I was one who rejoiced at the peace. I thought it would be lasting, because it was the interest of France, and the chief consul himself, that it should be permanent; and Bonaparte had repeatedly declared his regret that the two first nations in the world should waste their resources and power in enmity.

From

From the events of the war, and the separate treaties which had been concluded by her first confederates, it was impracticable for Britain to provide for their independence any farther than they chose to co-operate themselves. Restitution to allies was become a much narrower proposition than before, because allies were so few: it now comprehended only demands for the evacuation of Egypt[l]; and for the restoration of places which were taken from the queen of Portugal. The conquests of France had been immense, but ceded by their former possessors, could not with any hopes of success be reclaimed from her by Britain; and all the restitution which we sought to our allies was obtained. Respecting Britain herself, ministers did not think it necessary to insist on retaining all the acquisitions *of our valour*: we did not fight to subdue *the* possessions of others, but to secure ourselves. We agreed to restore all our acquisitions, except the island of Trinidad, and the Dutch possessions in the island of Ceylon. The Cape of Good Hope was to be opened to both parties: and the island of Malta was to be evacuated by Britain, but to be placed on such a footing as to render it totally independent of France.[m] As a mere question of terms and equivalents, it may be doubted whether we might not have commanded greater extent of territory, if acquisition had been our object; but acquisition was an object which the present, like the former ministry, uniformly disclaimed; and the retention of a plantation more or less was held to be a very inadequate ground for incurring the expence and loss of another campaign. The preliminaries,

[l] The news of the capture of Alexandria, as our readers will recollect, had not reached Britain; though by many it was supposed to have reached *the* chief consul; and that he readily consented to evacuate a country from which he knew his troops had been driven by force.

[m] See State Papers, Oct. 1. 1801.

 signed

CHAP. LXIX. 1801.

signed at London on the 1st of October, were ratified by the chief consul on the 7th; and so terminated the memorable war between Great Britain and the French republic.

THE treaty of Amiens opened new subjects of discussion, which, for the reasons mentioned in the preface, appear to me to belong more properly to a subsequent period, which shall embrace the history and progress of that pacification; the state and sentiments of the two countries, and of other nations during the peace; the rise and progress of the rupture, with the events which may ensue until hostilities be brought to a permanent conclusion. The most important object which Britain ascertained at the termination of the war, was her own security: for this valuable blessing, under Providence, she was indebted to her own extraordinary efforts during the whole of the contest, but especially since the rupture of the first negotiation at Paris. She had proved, even beyond her own exertions in former times, that she was superior to the whole naval world combined against her in war. Every attempt to disturb her rights, to invade her dominions, either directly or indirectly to impair the sources of her commercial prosperity and political greatness, have recoiled on the authors: never had her commerce been so flourishing, or her power so resistless, as during the most arduous war which her history has to record. Threatened, and actual rebellion, only demonstrated paramount loyalty and patriotism: attempts on her finances[n], displayed, beyond former conception,

[n] From the account presented this year to the house of commons, it appears that the national income amounts to the wonderful sum of sixty-three millions two hundred and forty-five thousand five hundred and fifty-nine pounds four shillings and eight-pence, exceeding the expenditure by six hundred and seventy-thousand and eighty pounds six and eight-pence, besides the annual million. From the same vouchers it appears, that so rapid has been the operation of Mr. Pitt's plan for the reduction of the national debt, that in sixteen years and a half sixty-seven millions two hundred and fifty-five thousand nine hundred and fifteen pounds have been paid off. — See No. 6. Accounts respecting the Public Funded Debt, p. 8. column second.

the

the extent of her resources; leaving their bounds far beyond calculation; resources exhaustless, because flowing from minds which afford perennial supply: menaced invasion served only to shew the number and force of her voluntary defenders. Every means that fertile genius could devise, or gigantic power execute, was essayed against our country: if she could have been subdued by any human effort, in the late arduous contest she must have fallen: the stupendous exertions that were employed against Britain, but employed in vain, demonstrate her invincible. HERE RESTS OUR SECURITY, IN THE MANIFESTATION OF RESOURCES NOT TO BE EXHAUSTED, A SPIRIT NOT TO BE BROKEN, AND A FORCE NOT TO BE SUBDUED: OUR SECURITY IS INVULNERABLE WHILE WE CONTINUE WHAT WE HAVE BEEN, AND ARE TRUE TO OURSELVES.

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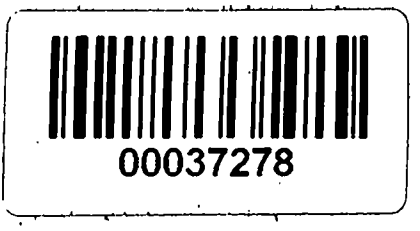
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